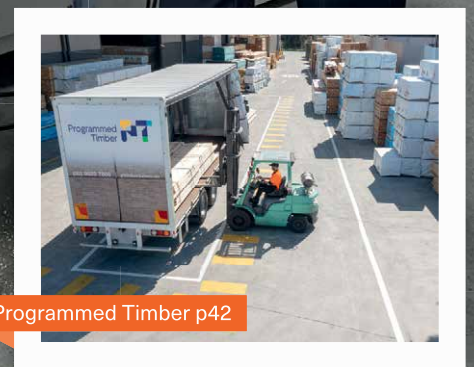


TimberTrader

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BUILDING MORE HOMES**

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COVER CREDIT: Courtesy Multinail Advance. Inset: Courtesy Artone.

Timber Trader acknowledges the Darug people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which this publication is produced, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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Publisher's note

We are very pleased to report our subscription base continues to grow and we have also welcomed 3 more from Overseas. The plethora of renewals which became due in April have all been renewed, with the exception of one who will be hitting the road with his wife as a grey nomad for the next 12 months with no fixed address.

We have received excellent updates from our associations plus some dedicated articles which provide important information for your reading enjoyment. If you have something unique or important to share, please email editor@timbertradernews.com and we will be in touch. A special thank you to our gifted graphic designer, Julitta Overdijk who is very patient and works with our team to ensure we achieve a smart, professional and easy to read magazine.

Our front cover story in this issue sees Multinail's latest offering, Multinail Advance, which marks a significant stride in timber construction, aiming to extend timber's reach beyond traditional building sectors.

With a focus on innovation, Multinail Advance introduces a range of products and services tailored for residential, multi-storey, and mass timber construction. Travis Taylor, CEO, emphasizes the shift towards timber in higher constructions, highlighting the need for industry adaptation. Multinail Advance's initial products, such as EcoBrace and Shortwall Bracing, target reducing reliance on structural steel and enhancing timber's viability in diverse projects. Looking ahead, Multinail aims to develop lightweight timber bracing and mass timber connections. Taylor underscores timber's pivotal role in meeting ambitious housing targets, stressing the industry's capacity for growth and adaptation. Multinail's commitment to providing integrated solutions and supporting fabricators underscores their dedication to advancing the Australian timber industry.

We delve into the Meyer Timber's recent acquisition of Newcastle Timber Traders (NTT) which maintains NTT's strong brand and culture while benefiting from Meyer's

resources. Despite the change in ownership, NTT remains an independent entity, retaining its name, brand, and commitment to the Newcastle region. The collaboration between the two companies has already seen positive results.

TTN had the privilege of visiting Programmed Timber (formerly Programmed Timber Supplies), to explore their recent rebranding, innovation, sustainability, and reliability. These elements combine to offer customers timely, high-quality timber solutions, fostering robust partnerships.

We trust you'll find this edition as enjoyable and valuable as the team found creating it. We deeply appreciate the continued support from our advertisers, supporters, subscribers, and readers. We look forward to continuing to bring you news, industry insights, new product information across the entire timber supply chain.



Timber Media
AUSTRALASIA

News in brief

AFPA welcomes strengthened laws to fight illegal logging

Last issue we welcomed Dianda Hallam, newly appointed CEO to AFPA. Now we look at one of the areas being tackled.

Australia's forest products sector welcomes legislation introduced into the Australian Parliament today by the Albanese Government that will strengthen Australia's fight against illegally logged timber, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) Diana Hallam said.

The provisions of the Illegal Logging Prohibition Amendment (Strengthening Measures to Prevent Illegal Timber Trade) Bill 2024 will improve Australia's ability to identify and act against those who undermine our legal and sustainable trade in wood and timber products.

Diana Hallam said, "Illegal timber not only undermines the environmental sustainability of the forest products industry, it also undermines our domestic biosecurity protections creating a heightened risk of potentially devastating pests and diseases that can devastate local industry.

The Bill will amend the Illegal Logging Prohibition Act 2012 to:

- Strengthen audit, compliance and enforcement of offence penalties.
- Enhance monitoring of compliance and streamline investigation powers.
- Require notice of products being brought into Australia.

"This updated legislation is particularly timely. Off the back of the native forestry industry closures in Victoria and Western Australia, we have seen a considerable increase in the volume of imported hardwoods and it's critical the proper checks, enforcement and penalties are in place if there's any doubt as to the source," Diana Hallam said.

"I encourage anyone suspicious about where their timber products have come from to inform authorities and if consumers are in doubt to look for Australian and certified timber. Australian timber can be trusted as sustainable, safe, pest and disease free.

"The integrity of our timber and fibre products is paramount. When grown,

harvested and processed properly, these products represent the height of sustainability, but when corners are cut, it can be environmentally damaging and undermine Australian jobs. We commend these proposed strengthened laws," Diana Hallam concluded.



PHOTO: JOE PREVEDELLO

Bathurst history

A new chapter has started in Bathurst with the transformation of a 60-year-old building into a modern office space.



Above: (Top) Original Historic Bathurst office; (Bottom) Historic Bathurst Forestry Commission building.

The original Forestry building, established in Panorama Avenue during 1963, has been rebuilt and renovated.

FCNSW Regional Manager Jason Molkentin said opening of the new building is a milestone in forestry in the Central West, "As one of the state's key softwood locations in NSW, Bathurst has shared a long and prosperous history with Forestry Corporation over the decades," Mr Molkentin said.

"[We] chose to inherit some of the character and charm of the original building into the new construction and the decision to rebuild enabled us to save expenditure on a total demolition, cutting down on the amount of waste produced from the old building."

"A key consideration with the project was hiring a local building company and using as many local suppliers and contractors as possible on the rebuild to ensure the return on investment to the local economy," he said. Bathurst-based company Hines Constructions completed the project over a period of eight months.

"We were particularly excited to be awarded the responsibility to rejuvenate and transform the Forestry Building, which is situated in our hometown of Bathurst," Hines Constructions Managing Director, David



Above: Western Advocate - FC office opening, Wednesday 17th July 1963.

Hines said. "It's always very rewarding to be involved in local projects, particularly the ones with historical significance. Working with Insight Projects and the Forestry Corporation was a great experience.

"With enthusiasm and a collaborative approach by all parties, we successfully bought an old building back to life, improved its functionality and created a beautiful space for the staff. It's a building that is aesthetically pleasing and one that enhances the appeal of Bathurst," he said. The office area had several internal alterations and upgrades over the years, but largely the overall footprint remained unchanged.

Mr Molkentin said the new office is around 40 per cent larger than the original building and offers a modern office space for 46 staff members. "The challenge for our local



Bathurst new building.

architects Derek Moses and the team from Havenh and Mather was to create a modern workplace while maintaining the distinctive facade of the former building; maintaining this historical connection was important to staff," Mr Molkentin said.

"We were also very keen to feature timber in the new office and our Architect and Design teams have been able to achieve this by using timber in both aesthetic and structural application. "It was also pleasing to use products sourced from customers which Forestry Corporation supplies with its renewable log products," he said.

Forestry Corporation temporarily leased an office space in Bathurst and staff worked from home and local depots while the rebuild was underway. Given Bathurst's changing weather extremes between summer and winter, insulation has been greatly improved in the new building for the comfort of staff. The building also has enhanced energy efficiency, modern componentry as well as solar panels generating power for the site.

A purpose-designed fire room has also been installed where Forestry's fire specialists will oversee bushfire and hazard reduction operations in state forests across the Central West.

Modern layout, efficient lighting and energy whilst retaining the historical facade.





FTMA: safety

Creating a Frame & Truss National Safety Council. By Kersten Gentle

In recent times, the frame and truss sector has witnessed a concerning uptick in avoidable accidents, casting a spotlight on the critical need for elevated safety protocols and industry-specific safety governance. The establishment of the FTMA Frame & Truss National Safety Council is a conscientious response to this emerging challenge, aiming to unify the sector under a banner of enhanced safety and prevention. By leveraging shared expertise and fostering a national dialogue, the Council aspires to cultivate a culture where safety is not an afterthought but the foundational bedrock of every operation, ensuring the wellbeing of all employees is held in the highest regard.

The establishment of the Frame & Truss National Safety Council (F&T NSC) is a pivotal step towards enhancing occupational safety within the timber frame and truss sector. As industries evolve, the need for specialised safety measures becomes paramount to protect those who are at the heart of daily operations. The F&T NSC

acknowledges this need and takes initiative in charting a course for a safer work environment. The health and welfare of employees are non-negotiable standards that underpin the reputation and productivity of the industry.

OBJECTIVES AND AIMS OF THE COUNCIL

Objective 1: Collaboration and Communication

- Establish a platform for ongoing dialogue between manufacturers, safety experts, and regulatory bodies.
- Create an efficient system for disseminating safety alerts, updates, and best practices.

Objective 2: Culture of Safety

- Assist companies in cultivating a workplace atmosphere where safety is universally valued and prioritised.
- Implement educational programs that emphasize the importance of safety measures in day-to-day operations.

Objective 3: Proactive Approach to Safety Concerns

- Develop a framework for identifying potential safety issues before they escalate into hazards.
- Encourage active member participation in bringing concerns to the council, ensuring swift and effective resolution.

Objective 4: Compliance and Advocacy

- Maintain adherence to the competition and consumer act, protecting the confidentiality and integrity of the council's activities.
- Advocate for safety improvements by leveraging strategic relationships with WorkSafe authorities and other industry stakeholders.

Objective 5: Industry Standards and Best Practices

- Set benchmarks for safety protocols and procedures that align with the latest technologies and standards.
- Regularly review and update safety guidelines, ensuring they meet the sector's dynamic needs.

Objective 6: Committee Structure and Membership

- Establish a diverse committee of WHS experts representing fabricator members, reinforcing the council's expertise and relevance from different jurisdictions throughout the country.
- Provide a transparent and equitable process for membership application, reflecting the council's commitment to collective safety advancement.

In summary, the F&T NSC is designed not only to address immediate concerns and forge improvements but to revolutionise the way the frame and truss sector views and implements safety, making it an integral, uncompromised aspect of all operations. Through the council's leadership, we envision a future where all fabricator employees work in conditions that are not just compliant with safety standards, but are exemplars in the industry, fostering a reputation of excellence and responsibility.

Membership of the Frame & Truss National Safety Council is open to FTMA fabricator members. We want people who have on the ground experience with the F&T sector and has time to commit to meetings and addressing safety concerns within the national frame and truss industry.

If you, or one of your colleagues wishes to be part of the Frame & Truss National Safety Council please contact Kersten Gentle on 0418 226 242.



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Exploring the potential of African Mahogany in the Northern Territory

In the heart of the Northern Territory, an ambitious project has been quietly growing for the last two decades.

The African mahogany (*Khaya senegalensis*) plantations, meticulously nurtured and tended to, are now on the cusp of a significant milestone. As these majestic trees reach maturity, the potential of African mahogany to capture the interest of discerning consumers and industries worldwide is immense.

Originally native to the semi-deciduous forests of the northern savannah belt of tropical Africa, from Senegal in the west to Uganda in the east, African mahogany has found a new home in the Northern Territory, where its adaptability and growth potential have been harnessed to create thriving plantations.

This endeavour stands as the largest African mahogany plantation in Australia, a testament to the pioneering spirit of African Mahogany Australia (AMA). They have been at the forefront of testing various silviculture regimes, pushing the boundaries of knowledge and innovation in sustainable forestry practices to determine the best ways to manage the species in the unforgiving NT climate.

Over the past 15 years, the managers of these estates have diligently overseen the growth of these valuable hardwoods. Now, with only several years remaining until the estate reaches its maturity, the focus has shifted towards unlocking the full potential of the African mahogany timber.

Exciting developments are underway as the company delves into testing the timber properties for various product options. While much of this testing has been conducted

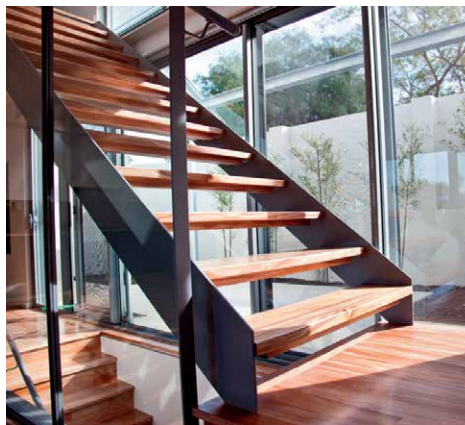
with young trees and juvenile timber, the results are promising. This crucial phase involves meticulous examination and experimentation to determine the most suitable applications for this prized resource. From cabinetry to fine furniture-making, boat-building and musical instruments, the versatility of African mahogany opens up a plethora of possibilities.

One particularly intriguing aspect that has garnered attention is the exquisite colouring of the timber. African mahogany boasts rich, warm hues from pale pink to deep red that add a touch of elegance to any finished product. This natural beauty makes it highly desirable for appearance-grade end products, elevating the aesthetic appeal of furniture, flooring, and decorative items.

The journey of African mahogany in the Northern Territory is a testament to the power of foresight, dedication, and sustainable management practices. It serves as a reminder of the untapped potential that lies within our natural resources and the opportunities they present for economic growth and environmental stewardship.

As we look ahead to the final maturation of these remarkable plantations, there is a sense of optimism and excitement for what the future holds. With African mahogany poised to make its mark in the timber markets, it holds promise for economic prospects of the Northern Territory forestry industry.

For more, visit www.fiant.org.au



Clockwise from top left: Beautiful African Mahogany stairs; designer chairs; stunning floors; Mahogany colour and pattern samples.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF FORESTRY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION NT



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- Retail Supplier of the Year
- Garden & Outdoor Supplier of the Year
- Safety Culture Award
- Trainee/Apprentice of the Year
- Student of the Year
- Host of the Year

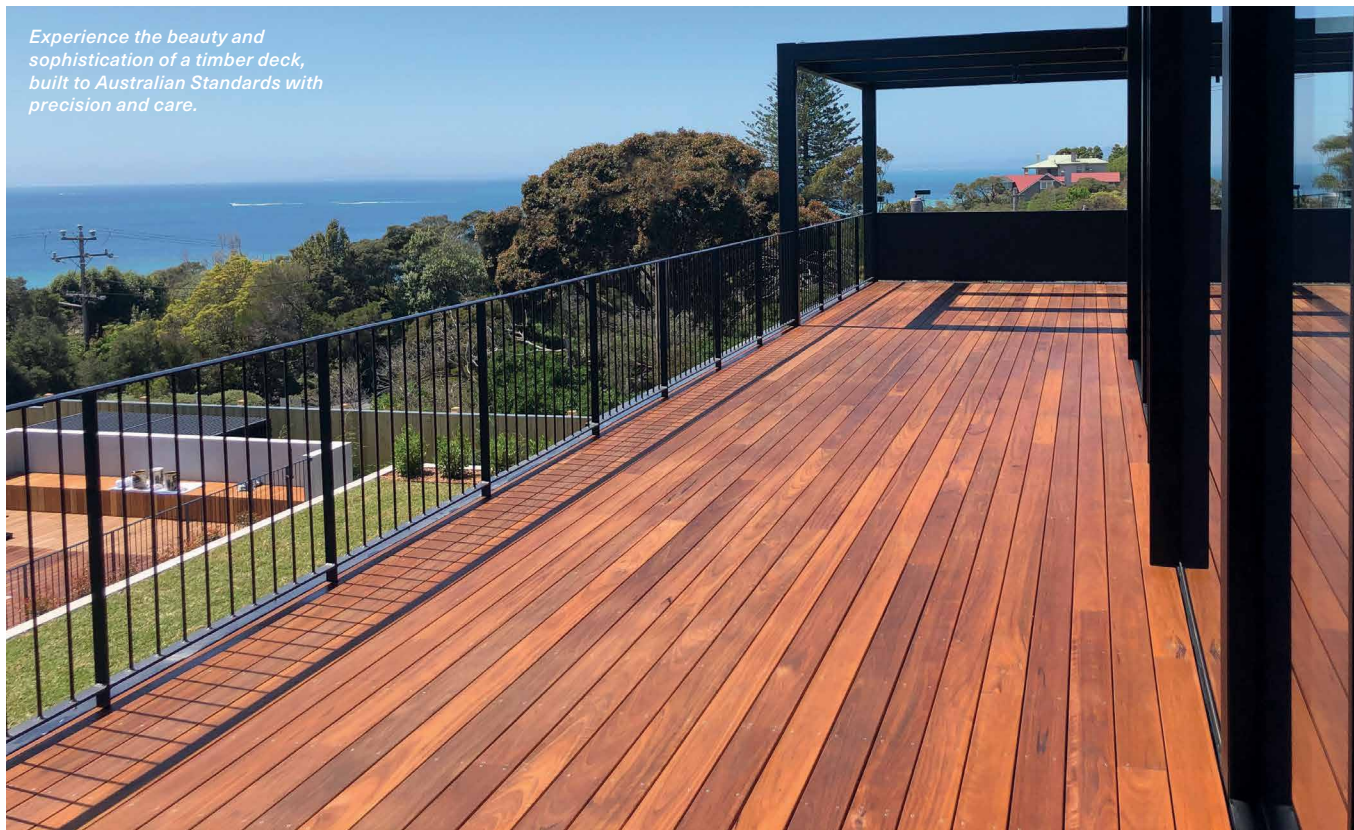
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Avoid a balcony crisis

Homeowners can prevent this sort of damage by taking proactive steps to maintain their balconies and other timber home elements.

Balcony damage doesn't have to be the 'next big problem'.

The prospect of a "looming" balcony crisis in Victorian homes has raised concerns, but proactive measures can be taken to assess and address potential structural issues before they escalate. Timely inspections, maintenance, and necessary repairs can help mitigate risks and ensure the safety and longevity of these properties.

"Analysing the timber species and waterproofing systems used could be a crucial step in understanding why these issues are occurring, especially if the buildings are around 10 years old," said Professor Tripti Singh, Director of the National Centre for Timber Durability and Design Life.

Timber is a safe, durable, and predictable material to work with but like anything else, it requires ongoing maintenance. Some are saying that defective balconies are the biggest concern for buildings constructed in the last 15 years, but homeowners can prevent this sort of damage by taking proactive steps to maintain their balconies and other timber home elements.

If you are looking to purchase a home or already own a home with a balcony, inspections are a great first step. Knowing the state of the balcony and what materials

have been used arms you with the necessary knowledge to maintain your property. Inspections can help identify construction quality and design flaws so that you and your builder can plan the appropriate course of action for your balcony and decking concerns.

Balconies and decks constructed prior to provisions introduced into the National Construction Code (NCC) may not meet current safety standards, as these provisions weren't in place to mandate construction. However, with the implementation of the NCC provisions, decks designed and built to adhere to these provisions are considered to meet safe service life standards when properly maintained.

From design to installation, timber is a durable and sustainable choice when correctly specified and constructed. Choosing a knowledgeable builder who knows the ins and outs of waterproofing and timber construction can provide you the reassurance you need to trust your balcony or raised decking system will last. From recommended timber species, termite protection and weather protection to sub-deck supports, builders can find all the details they need on domestic timber deck design from WoodSolutions.

Timber professionals know that choosing

the right timber species for each project is key to a long-lasting build. If you want to do some research of your own, you can download the SpeciesSolutions app to research timber species for any home project.

Preventative measures such as coating systems (paints, stains), preservative and on-going maintenance assure your timber balcony can survive the elements. Waterproofing and maintaining that barrier is key to keeping your balcony in shape. If the damage has already occurred and you need to know what to do next, download the guide to learn about the Impact and Assessment of Moisture-affected Timber-framed Construction.

The WoodSolutions guide on Domestic Timber Deck Design that, when used alongside modern design and construction techniques, is a best practice guide and tool that can assist tradespeople in delivering a safe and durable balcony or deck.

Homeowners should regularly inspect and maintain balconies and decks made from timber to ensure structural integrity and safety. Timber is susceptible to weathering and damage over time, posing potential hazards if left unchecked. Regular inspections and maintenance, including sealing, staining, and repairing any damage, can prolong the lifespan of the structure and prevent accidents or costly repairs in the future.

Find out more about timber durability, installation, inspection and more at WoodSolutions.com.au.

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JUNE 4-6th

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The partnership with the Big 5 Construct South African Expo, The Deck & Flooring Expo and the African Smart Cities Summit further enhances the value and experience for visitors and exhibitors. This collaboration brings together professionals and stakeholders from different industries, providing a broader perspective and more opportunities for collaboration, innovation, and growth.

The WoodEX for Africa will take place on 3 days from Tuesday, 04. June to Thursday, 06. June 2024 in Johannesburg. www.woodexforafrica.com

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The EFTE-pillow building envelope “provides great thermal and daylight benefits to the internal environment of the hangar”.

Profiling 3 engineered wood projects in NZ

Diverse construction projects take advantage of engineered wood solutions. **By Michael Smith**

New Zealand’s architecture, engineering and manufacturing sectors have become increasingly familiar with building in engineered wood across a variety of

construction projects. *Timber Trader News* considers three such projects (in aviation, low-rise residential and education), which emphasise the material’s practicalities and advantages.

HANGAR 4

Currently under construction at Air New Zealand’s engineering base in Mangere, Auckland is its new 10,000-square-metre Hangar 4 facility – about to become the largest single-span timber arch aircraft hangar in the southern hemisphere*.

According to lead architect Patrick Thompson (of Studio Pacific Architecture), the LVL and CLT hybrid timber arch spans 98 metres and “is predominantly put together off-site in transportable sizes. The trusses are prefabricated in five parts, assembled on site lying down and then lifted into place.”

Thompson notes that engineered timber has significantly lower upfront embodied carbon than steel. He adds that Hangar 4 is designed as a 5-6



Above: Air New Zealand’s Hangar 4: at 98 metres, it will be the largest single-span timber arch aircraft hangar in the southern hemisphere.

*It’s interesting to note that during the Pacific War, the RAAF constructed a number of hangars that incorporated local hardwoods into their designs – partially in response to a shortage of steel at the time. And, coming right up to date, is the Museum of Transport and Technology’s Aviation Display Hall in Auckland. The hall is primarily a series of portal frames, purlins, girts and wall cross-bracing constructed of LVL – achieving an impressive 42-metre clear span.

Green Star rated building. “Internationally recognised for the design, construction and operation of buildings, achieving this rating requires high sustainable performance across numerous design factors – including emissions reductions, energy efficiency, indoor environment quality, land use and ecology, building management, material selections, and water consumption.”

Thompson says the hangar’s EFTE-pillow building envelope “is lightweight and can span long distances relative to sheet products, which require more secondary structure. It also provides great thermal and daylight benefits to the internal environment of the hangar.”

Kulwinder Panesar, Senior Project Manager at Air New Zealand, says the hangar will be able to accommodate one wide-bodied aircraft and two narrow-bodied aircraft.

It will also house dedicated administration offices for planners and engineers to carry out aircraft maintenance. Service pits will provide specialist services to the aircraft, including compressed air, potable water, mass airflow sensors, pre-conditioned air units, and a high-expansion foam firefighting system.

Panesar says the project’s engineered timber is sourced from two places – the CLT from XLam in Australia and the LVL from Nelson. XLam’s earlier shift of its production from New Zealand to Australia has not resulted in any supply chain issues – and the hangar is on track for completion (and due to be operational) in Q3 of 2025.

317 HARDY STREET, NELSON

This residential townhouse complex, situated in the heart of Nelson city, is a hybrid structure that comprises eight three-storey residential apartments. As noted in a Mid-Rise Wood Construction case study, it features “concrete foundations, ground floor slabs and low-level precast concrete walls,

with extensive CLT walls and floors above”.

A spokesperson for the structural engineers (AMK Ltd) said CLT panels were chosen because the soft ground conditions “required a lightweight superstructure with a ground raft to mitigate long-term settlement issues that could have arisen from a heavier reinforced concrete solution”.

Further, the lighter-weight CLT allowed for increased speed of construction – shorter hook time and greater floor coverage per square metre for each crane lift. No temporary propping was required within the building’s footprint, which meant early access to the lower floors for storage of materials and fit out.

The engineers noted that the CLT solution required early contractor engagement to determine the most efficient construction methodology.

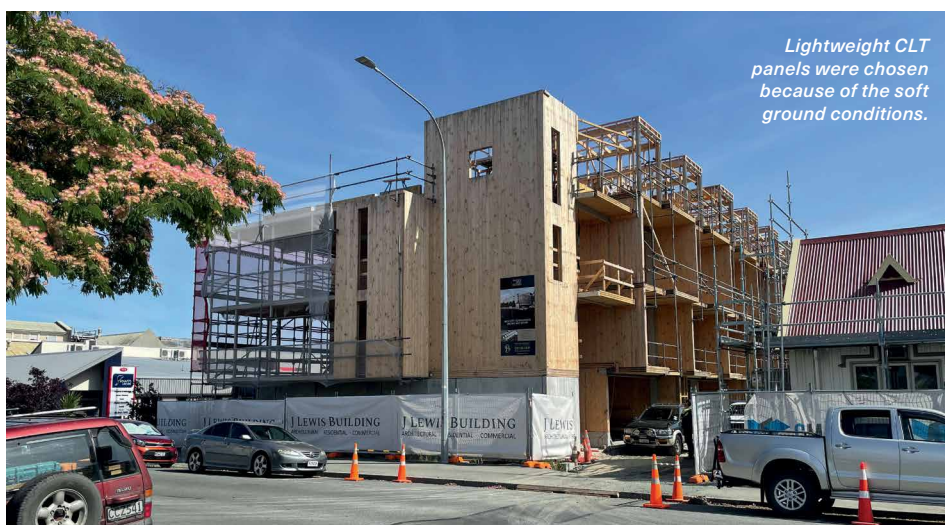
Meantime, a spokesperson for the architects believed that “prefabrication required more work up front including computer modelling, which was beneficial to share between the specialised trades. Once

on site the co-ordination of all trades went very well – noticeably the speed in getting up and out of the ground and ensuring the safety of construction workers. “Service penetrations were the one area we needed to provide more input and we’d change that in the future.”

The developer and builder both agreed that engineered wood has become an established construction material over the last 15 years in New Zealand. “It can be incorporated into multiple design solutions ... when protected appropriately from the elements.

“Strength-to-weight ratio, ease of working, speed of erection and ability to sequester carbon make the incorporation of EWPs into projects ‘a must consider rather than a nice to have’.”

Interestingly, they concluded that the available off-the-shelf solutions specific for CLT have improved considerably since this project began (especially acoustic options) – which has made the system more usable, and easier to detail and get through the consenting process. >>



Lightweight CLT panels were chosen because of the soft ground conditions.



317 Hardy St, Nelson: incorporating EWPs into projects now “a must consider rather than a nice to have”.

PHOTO: (TOP) MICHAEL SMITH



Above: The 2010-11 earthquakes put more focus on the resilience of buildings with a large component of timber. Architects: Sheppard & Rout.

MARIAN COLLEGE

Following the 2011 Christchurch earthquake, when the Catholic college was destroyed, the search was on for a permanent home. That was only resolved in 2019 when a 3.15-hectare site was acquired in the suburb of Papanui.

The new land came with one of the largest distribution centres in the South Island (some 17,500m²) – and it was decided to make use of the existing warehouse by constructing a built-for-purpose timber school inside the original steel building.

The college's facilities include six classroom blocks, a central, freestanding chapel, library, various technical rooms/laboratories, and double-height performing arts and sports amenities.

A Timber Unlimited case study of the project noted that using as much timber as possible within the steel structure “spread the seismic loadings on the ‘poor quality’ soils and met the economic demands of the Diocese. Like many projects, the budget had been under significant pressure as a result of Covid, material supply and labour availability issues.”

Sustainability and attaining a 4 Green Star rating were important considerations for the client – most notably through materials such as glulam, LVL beams, the Potius® flooring and roofing, and Strandboard® linings, which combined to sequester more carbon than steel and concrete.

Jonathan Kennedy, spokesperson for the architects (Sheppard & Rout), says that timber was the obvious construction material of choice. “Costs could be contained as far as possible, especially when a whole-of-life approach was considered.”

He notes that claddings specified by the Ministry of Education are usually based on

the assumption that a school is an external structure, not sitting inside another building. “Retaining part of the original warehouse to shelter the college meant a significant saving on those costs.”

Kennedy adds that the Potius® panel system of cross-banded LVL box beams delivered the structural spans necessary to achieve large, open-plan teaching spaces. “These beams were also known by and acceptable to the ministry for use in a school, following our previous project experiences with them.”

In conclusion, Kennedy says: “Selecting the right consultant team, including those with prior experience and knowledge of timber technology, has enabled the realisation of a wonderfully warm and sustainable set of spaces within an otherwise uncompromising existing warehouse shell.” **T**



Above: Marian College: makes use of an existing warehouse by constructing a built-for-purpose timber school inside the original steel building. Architects: Sheppard & Rout.

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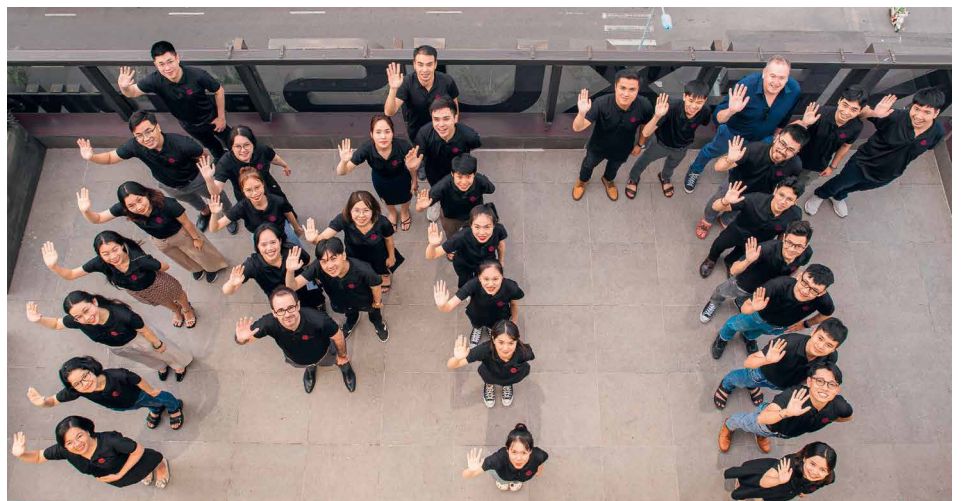
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- **Drafting:** Drafting services are essential for industries like architecture, interior design, and manufacturing. Outsourcing

drafting tasks ensures high-quality designs and efficient project timelines. MyTeam's drafting specialists create detailed architectural, HVAC, kitchen, and other designs, supporting construction projects.

- **Project Estimating:** Estimating and quoting are fundamental tasks in many businesses, especially in trades and services. Outsourcing these functions can lead to faster turnaround times and more competitive pricing strategies.
- **Finance:** From Bookkeeping to Payroll, outsourcing accounting tasks can provide businesses with access to qualified professionals without the overhead costs associated with hiring full-time staff.

MyTeam empowers businesses to thrive using the benefits of outsourcing while maintaining control and efficiency. Whether you need to fill skill gaps, accelerate growth, or streamline operations, MyTeam's expertise and support can help you achieve your goals. **T**

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What our readers say...

“ As one of the leading insurance brokers for the timber businesses in Australia we subscribe to *Timber Trader News* to ensure we are keeping abreast of all the exciting things happening within the timber industry. *Timber Trader News* is read “cover to cover” by our staff and it’s always enjoyable to see and read about clients and the various events occurring within the timber industry. Reading *TTN* keeps us informed and updated on all things timber which is important to ensure our services are evolving to meet the various challenges and opportunities which arise. ”

David Keys – Director Corporate
Winner of the Austbroker of the year award 2023

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Association news



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MIKAELA MCKENZIE JOINS MGA THA AS DIRECTOR OF MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Welcome Mikaela

Since joining MGAIBA, Mikaela has hit the ground running. It's hard to catch her between meetings!

There have been some significant changes within MGAIBA these past few months. First, we rebranded MGA TMA, now Timber & Hardware Australia, to accommodate a more contemporary and inclusive brand and

membership positioning. We also decided that a new role be created that would drive membership and corporate partner engagement and value across all membership sectors.

This decision led us to Mikaela McKenzie, appointed as our Director of Member Engagement at MGAIBA. With an extensive background spanning over a decade in member-based organisations, Mikaela brings a wealth of expertise in strategic partnerships, marketing, communications, events, and business development to MGAIBA and the Timber & Hardware Australia team. Mikaela's commitment to placing members at the forefront of every decision, coupled with a shared vision to empower independent businesses to flourish, makes Mikaela such a valuable

addition to the THA team. With her mantra of prioritising the member experience in all endeavours, we are confident in her ability to foster meaningful relationships and drive impactful initiatives that will benefit both members and partners alike.

Cindi Damian



**Timber Trade
Industrial Association**

CONTRACTOR OR EMPLOYEE – TAX IMPLICATIONS

Just when you thought the legal and tax implications imposed on business was already far too complicated, it just gets worse every time the government or their departments focus in again on any aspect of the contractor relationship. It is becoming patently clear that just because an agreement states that a worker is an independent contractor, this does not mean that they are a contractor for tax and superannuation purposes according to the ATO.

Where there is a written contract, the rights and obligations of the contract need to support that an independent contracting relationship exists. The fact that a contractor has an ABN does not necessarily mean that they have genuinely been engaged as a contractor. The ATO says that "at its core, the distinction between an employee and an independent contractor is that:

- an employee serves in the business of an employer, performing their work as a part of that business,
- an independent contractor provides services to a principal's business, but the contractor does so in furthering their own business enterprise; they carry out the work as principal of their own business, not part of another."

Contracts over time

The ATO points out that a contracting agreement at the start of a relationship may not continue to be one over time. For example, if the project the contractor was engaged to complete has finished, but the worker continues working for the company then the classification needs to be revisited.

What happens if there is no contract?

If no contract exists, then it's important to look at the form and substance of the relationship to come to a reasonable position about whether an employment or contractor

Mikaela McKenzie

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relationship exists.

That said, it is important to have a written contract clearly stating the terms of the services provided and the nature of the relationship. This will assist if the matter is tested by a third party.

Legal Support for TTIA members

If you need assistance or legal advice on a contractor agreement you may have as a business, contact TTIA's Legal Department for practical plain English assistance on 02 9264 0011.

WORKERS COMPENSATION WORK BREAK & JOURNEY CLAIMS

An employee may be able to make a claim for injuries incurred during work breaks and some work-related journeys.

Work break claims

An employee may be able to claim for injuries received during an ordinary work break (e.g. morning tea or lunch break) or authorised temporary absence.

Claims while on a journey

If a worker is injured while travelling for the purposes of work, then they may be able to

TTIA has professional support available

lodge a claim for workers compensation.

If injured while travelling to or from work and their home, then they may be able to lodge a claim for workers compensation. This is determined on a case-by-case basis. Speak with your insurer for more information.

For compensation to be payable there must be a real and substantial connection between the worker's employment and the accident or incident which resulted in the injury. However, if the injury in a motor vehicle accident occurred while travelling between the workplace and home, there may be an entitlement to compensation under the Compulsory Third Party (CTP) Scheme.

Further information on www.sira.nsw.gov.au/workers-compensation-claimsguide/understanding-the-claims-journey/eligibility/journey-and-recess-claims

Brian Beecroft – CEO



TASMANIAN STATE ELECTION – FORESTRY REVIEW

The washup 2024 State Election campaign has shown forestry is still important to Tasmanians, writes **Nick Steel**.

State elections are a time for review - a chance for the electorate to judge the actions of the former government, to determine who is best placed to lead the state over the next term, and to examine which party best represents their opinions and values.

For the 5,700 Tasmanians employed by our forestry sector it is great comfort that both major parties backed our industry in the 2024 poll, offering certainty of supply and stability through their promises, which will allow our businesses to invest in their operations for the long term.

The thousands employed by our sector make up a very diverse industry. We have not only private estate owners and sawmillers, but also businesses as diverse as plywood manufacturers, paper producers, and developers of cutting-edge engineered >>

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wood products, so developing policy with industry is essential to meet our various needs.

By backing contracts to existing Tasmanian businesses in the campaign, as well as guaranteeing hardwood plantation supply and temporarily pausing the current public estate contract negotiations, both parties have shown they believe the majority of Tasmanians want a strong and sustainable forestry industry in our state.

It's pleasing that politicians from both sides of the aisle have backed our industry, worked directly with us, broadly listened to our concerns, and have acted swiftly to ensure the future success for our businesses - and securing thousands of jobs in regional Tasmania.

And while we welcome the extra resource being made available to our businesses, we continue to insist that any expansion of the public estate must follow due process, including considering balancing the conservation value, the opportunities for aboriginal management and access for the sustainable forestry sector.

We are also pleased that both parties backed our Election Wishlist - a road map for all political parties and candidates on how best to protect regional communities, the Tasmanian economy and the sustainability and profitability of our members businesses.

With the election done and dusted, and the new parliament slowly being revealed, we look forward to working with the new elected representatives to ensure the future success of our local Tasmanian businesses, and the thousands of regional families employed in forestry across the state.

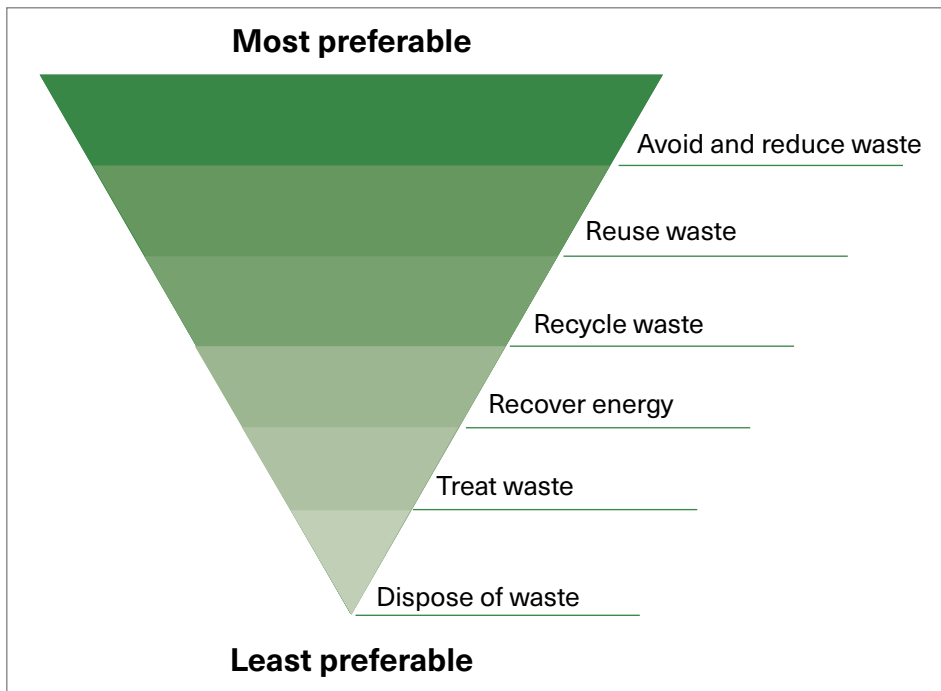
The TFPA Election Wishlist can be downloaded at the TFPA website. www.tfpa.com.au/tfpa-2024-state-election-wishlist/

Nick Steel is Chief Executive Officer of the Tasmanian Forest Products Association.



CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND END-OF-LIFE SOLUTIONS FOR PRESERVATIVE TREATED TIMBER AND ENGINEERED WOOD PRODUCTS

There is no doubt about it, Australians are excellent consumers of products! With many of these products ultimately ending up as waste and needing to go somewhere. Australia produces many millions of tons of



SOURCE: EWPA ADMINISTRATION

waste per year with a significant proportion currently ending up in landfill, including a significant amount of timber, preservative treated timber and engineered wood products (EWPs).

Limited landfill capacity and ongoing changes in public perceptions have encouraged robust re-use and recycling systems for paper, metals, and plastic, forming part of a growing interest in circular economy approaches. We all know that timber has amazing structural properties with strong environmental attributes including being both renewable and recyclable, but traditionally it has limited end-of-life options, especially for preservative treated timber and EWPs.

With this challenge in mind the National Centre for Timber Durability and Design Life based at the University of Sunshine Coast in QLD has been tasked with conducting a large 3-year 'Timber Circularity' project to ensure stewardship and end of life management options for preservative treated timber and EWPs. Project activities include:

- Develop disposal volume estimates by material category and region/State.
- Identify potential regulatory constraints associated with reuse of each material and propose solutions.
- Develop transportation/collection strategies by material and location.
- Review existing technologies for reuse/recovery to identify/fill knowledge gaps.

Identify viable re-use options to timber users.

Solutions will be investigated and prioritised using the well-known 'waste hierarchy', that establishes a preferential order of management options based on environmental benefit and this is used widely

to guide waste management decisions (e.g., avoid, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover, treat, or dispose). This approach helps minimise waste generation, conserve resources, and reduce environmental pollution.

Project funding is through Forest & Wood Products Australia and industry contributions. The project's activities are overseen by an expert industry technical advisory committee made up of stakeholders from the timber industry (including EWPA), winegrowers, frame and truss fabrication sector, and large timber treatment and adhesive solution providers. For more information on the project go to: <https://www.usc.edu.au/research/forest-research-institute/national-centre-for-timber-durability-and-design-life/timber-circularity-project>

We can all agree that our renewable wood products offer versatile and fit-for-purpose solutions. Ongoing innovations in timber preservative treatments and adhesives are necessary to meet the durability and engineering requirements of Australian industry, designers, builders, and consumers. The importance of providing high quality factual communication materials and effective end-of-life solutions is essential to close the loop on our amazing renewable products now and into the future.

As always, ensuring the conformance of timber building products is key. A reputable product certification mark is a great way to have confidence that the manufacturing facility, the timber building product, and associated claims have been inspected, audited, tested, and reviewed against the product standards by independent experts. EWPA has you covered! **See www.ewp.asn.au and EWPA's technical notes.**

Gavin Matthew – EWPA CEO



NAVIGATING REGULATORY WATERS: INSIGHTS FROM NTHA'S CEO DAVID LITTLE

In the fast-paced world of small business where every decision counts, regulatory compliance can often feel like a never-ending maze. At the Council of Small Business Organisations Australia (COSBOA) Summit in April, the National Timber & Hardware Association's (NTHA) CEO, David Little, found himself at the centre of discussions surrounding the challenging regulatory landscape faced by countless entrepreneurs.

The Summit, attended by Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, and Opposition Leader, Peter Dutton, as well as heads of major compliance organisations such as the ATO, ASIC, and ACCC, shed light on the formidable challenges confronting businesses today. From the relentless influx of new regulations like "Closing the Loop" to the weighty responsibilities entailed by initiatives like "Positive Duty," the pressure



Above: David Little HNTA CEO.



on business owners is significant.

For David Little, the Summit served as a poignant reminder of the uphill battle his members face in navigating red-tape. "The

incredible regulatory burden our members face in running their businesses in the timber and hardware industry," he reflects, "is compounded by the ever-evolving landscape of Workplace Health and Safety obligations."

Despite these challenges, NTHA is committed to supporting its members. Through a multifaceted approach that offers members online resources, comprehensive programs such as Positive Duty, and dedicated industrial relations support, the organisation establishes itself as a reliable source of assistance and support during turbulent times. Little stated, "Almost all of these NTHA services are offered either free of charge or at a not-for-profit, very attractive market rate, tailored specifically to our industry."

As the regulatory tide continues to surge, NTHA stands ready to assist its members in navigating these turbulent waters. "Reach out," urges Little, "and we will assist, or find someone who can." In the face of adversity, NTHA remains a steadfast service provider for businesses.

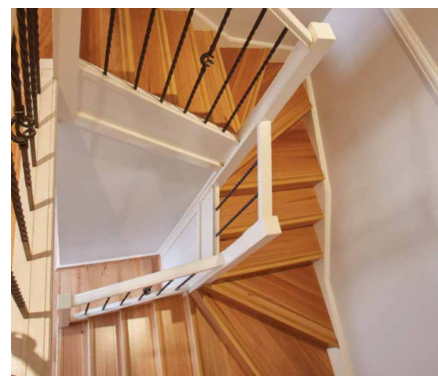
For more on how NTHA can support your business visit www.ntha.com.au or contact the team on info@ntha.com.au.

David Little CEO >>

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'Australian Forest and Wood Innovation' has been established

TDA Timber Development Association

RESEARCH ON TIMBER FRAMING

TDA is working with like-minded associations and industry colleagues to look at the lightweight timber-framed construction sector, as it is falling behind competitive materials. One of the fundamental reasons is that our timber design standards are outdated with modern practices, products, and regulations.

The Australian residential timber construction industry, which is reported to

be valued at \$2.75 billion annually, faces critical threats from outdated standards, aggressive competitor lobbying for substitute materials, and a lack of scalable solutions limiting broader market opportunities.

With the formation of the Australian Forest and Wood Innovation, there is an opportunity to get some of these long overdue issues sorted. The technical representative within the timber industry had had extensive consultation over the last eighteen months across industry associations, manufacturers, academia, and builders to build and present a roadmap for a proposed project that seeks

to assist both in resolving many of the current technical roadblocks and modernising timber framing standards for contemporary building needs by targeting current barriers around regulations, design constraints, supply chain efficiency, on-site construction practices, lack of recognition of current engineered wood product usage, and advancing off-site manufacture and prefabrication practices.

Key priority areas will include updating core standards to current products and practices, expanding prescriptive packages beyond housing limitations, optimising manufacturing and build systems, addressing engineering guidance gaps, and tackling integral code updates. Outcomes from the project will equip stakeholders with streamlined technical specifications to boost productivity, safety and compliance over an increased building scale and use cases - retaining and growing timber framing's market.

TDA asks that the industry support this initiative as it is a once-in-a-generation opportunity.

UNLOCKING THE FUTURE: A CRYSTAL BALL INTO MASS TIMBER'S ASCENT

TDA was lucky to be invited to the USA by the Foreign Agriculture Service and the American Plywood Association to look at the future of mass timber. What was seen was a 19-storey building that simplifies the use of wood into a kit of parts. Technically called a post and plate building system, it copies concrete framed construction but in wood and a smaller grid.

The system is simple, regularly spaced columns that support the edge of a mass timber panel, such as CLT. The columns have metal capitals that support the CLT and connect the next storey's column. The example building, 1510 Webster St Oakland, was developed, designed, and constructed by oWOW, with assistance from DCI Engineers; the project is also the tallest mass timber building built in a high seismic zone.

The project has moved at a remarkable speed, topping out after just 8 months. The developer oWOW said using mass timber structures would serve as a game changer in the industry, allowing for much faster building and offering a more cost-effective and environmentally friendly alternative to building with concrete and steel. According to the developer, the building cost 30% less than concrete and was 30% faster.

TDA is helping Melbourne University's CRC Build 4.0 into the feasibility of this system in Australia.

Andrew Dunn CEO



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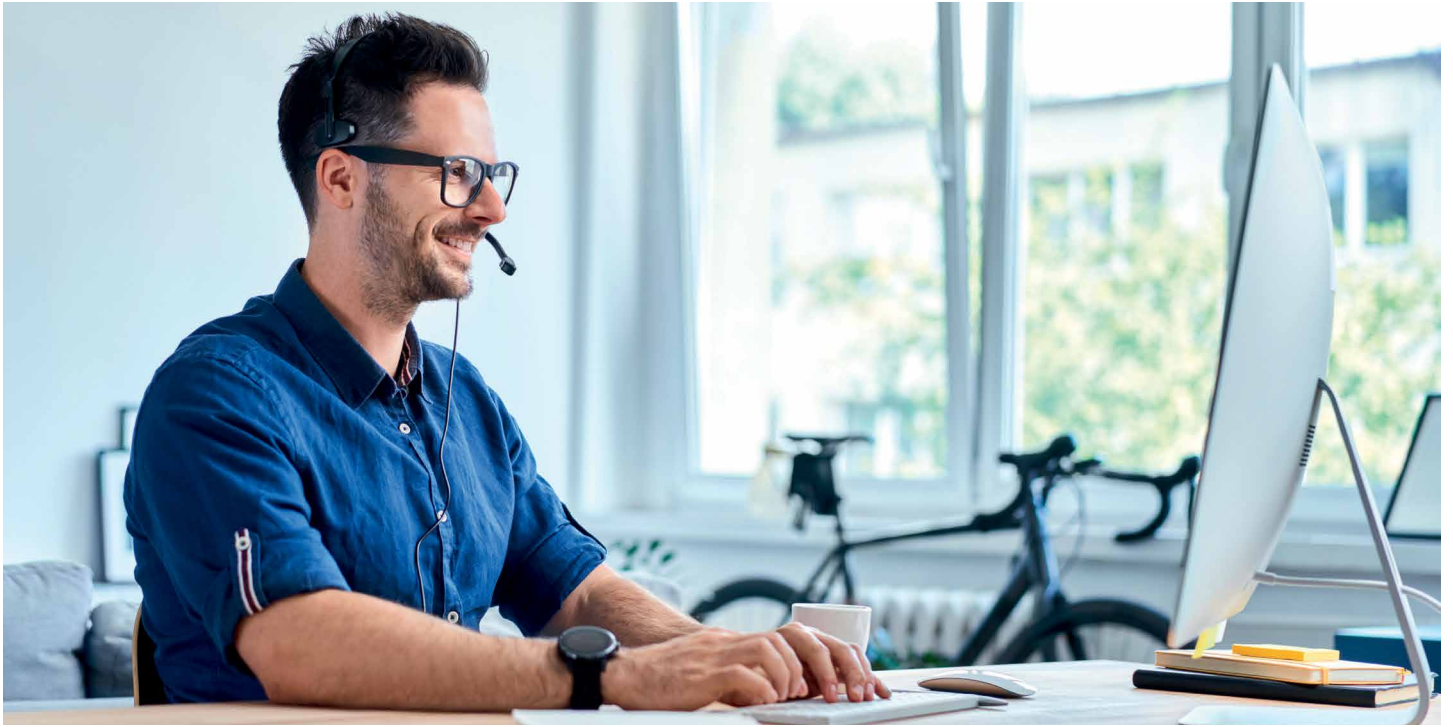
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Checkup time and the 4c's

The Changing world of people management. **By Peter Maguire**

The world of people and culture management and what organisations need to do to ensure their compliance with legal obligations is going through the most significant upheaval there has been for a very long time.

Over a period of 3 years from 2022 to 2025, there are in excess of seventy changes already occurring in employment laws and jurisdictions with more to come. Here we explore the questions of why this is happening and what you should be doing about it.

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

COVID created changes for peoples' work experiences and life balance especially in relation to remote and hybrid working which have fundamentally shifted the paradigm for people's expectations regarding work and flexibility in their lives.

Younger generations are challenging employers to be more engaging, more progressive and socially responsible, more invested in their people and more advanced technologically so as to fit with their needs and desires regarding their present and future working lives and workplaces.

The rising costs of mental injuries and illness have given rise to a positive duty to eliminate psychosocial hazards from our workplaces because there is no doubt that

traditional people and risk management processes have made a contribution to the problem.

We are also seeing the highest ever levels of burnout among our leaders because of the complexities involved in managing organisations, talent shortages and increased exposure to serious sanctions for misconduct (e.g. in relation to wage theft or industrial manslaughter) including massive fines and imprisonment.

At the same time, we are having the most significant period of change in workplace relations law and modern award provisions for decades.

Gender equality and security of employment are now primary considerations for the Fair Work Commission in all of its deliberations and there are multiple new jurisdictions for prosecuting sexual harassment, gender-based behaviour and parental leave and related entitlements.

So, it is a perfect storm with change coming from lots of different angles but with one common denominator – we have to fundamentally change the way that we manage people's engagement, performance, development and wellbeing.

WHAT DOES COMPLIANCE LOOK LIKE?

Historically, compliance has been interpreted

as requiring an organisation to set policies, tell people what the rules are and the consequences of not complying with them and acting on any complaints or reports of breaches.

Often, it has been a tick box exercise e.g. get the employee to sign on the bottom line and you can prove that you told them the rules, so you have done your duty and you're protected.

That is really not compliance and that has now been recognised forcibly through the introduction of positive duties.

The reality is that compliance involves a lot more than having a policy and procedure – compliance is really about what happens in practice, not just what is on paper.

We developed our 4C compliance model back in 2005 and it is still pretty much on the money today.

The 4Cs are:

C1: COMMITMENT: We demonstrate acknowledgement and intention through formulation of formal policy and consultation and communications with stakeholders.

C2: CAPABILITY: We invest in the resources that are necessary to give the policy life – the procedures, the people, the tools and other resources.

C3: COMPETENCY: We provide our people and those with specific responsibilities, with

the training, coaching and support that they need to play their roles in line with our policies and procedures and hold them accountable for doing so.

C4: CULTURE: We consistently apply the policy and processes competently to embed them in everyday practice always seeking to improve and adapting to changes in our needs and regulatory requirements.

Unless your business and your leaders consistently do all four of those, your organisation is not compliant and hasn't really been for a long time.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO?

In January 2024, Gallup released a "2024 Employee Engagement Strategy Checklist" in which it tells us that 44% of employees worldwide say they are stressed and proposes some things that organisations can do to get people more engaged and less stressed.

HERE IS GALLUP'S LIST:

1. **Check in on your managers** because they are more likely to be feeling burned out and stressed and you need them to feel supported and capable of leading their people effectively.
2. **Prepare managers to have meaningful conversations with employees** in which they recognise strengths and achievements, set and refine goals and priorities and support them in relationships and collaboration.

3. **Prioritise promoting vision and purpose, especially among remote workers** for whom Gallup's research says that only 28% feel connected to their organisation's mission and purpose.
4. **Measure engagement** to show employees that you care about their feedback and want to know how they are doing.
5. **Take action on survey results** – nothing builds positive momentum for an engagement initiative more than asking for feedback, doing something about it and sharing and celebrating positive results.

They say that their research shows that 80% of employees who say they have received meaningful feedback in the past week are fully engaged, regardless of how many days they worked in the office.

When it comes to having meaningful conversations with employees, Gallup said that they should include:

1. Recognition or appreciation of recent work.

2. Collaboration and relationships.
3. Current goals and priorities at work.
4. Employee strengths and the things that they do well.

How long should these conversations be? If they are done regularly (i.e. weekly), they should take no longer than 15 to 30 minutes.

YOU NEED THE RIGHT HR ADVISOR

All employers have a duty to have access to professional advice on workplace health and safety and workplace relations matters.

And what is happening in these areas now makes these fields among the most complex to manage in a business.

For small to medium businesses which cannot justify their own dedicated HR/WHS resources, that means that you really do have to engage with an external professional either through an industry association or a consulting service.

Make sure that whoever that is knows about the positive duty and doesn't just deliver you the same old set of policies, contracts, and job descriptions. They have to be able to do a lot more than that to be the right HR Advisor. **T**

Peter Maguire is the owner and practice leader of Ridgeline HR, an award winning HRM consulting practice which he founded in 2000. Peter is an acknowledged expert in workplace relations compliance and also a high-performance leadership coach with over 40 years' experience in HRM. Ridgeline HR's byline is Helping PEOPLE in BUSINESS and that is essentially what Peter does – help business people with their people business.



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Multinail Advance: taking timber to greater heights

Multinail has announced their newest product, Multinail Advance offering a complete build solution which will see timber scaling new heights. **By Nicky Ainley**

As the building industry continues to see an increase in the use of timber in construction, Multinail Australia is focusing on bringing new products and services to a wider range of building types than the detached and semi-detached markets.

Multinail is proud to announce the launch of Multinail Advance, a new, exciting addition to the Multinail Brand. The core focus of Multinail Advance is to introduce Multinail's extensive range of existing products and services to new markets while innovating and developing new solutions tailored to both the existing and new markets for Multinail Fabricators.

MULTINAİL ADVANCE

Multinail Advance was developed to expand the company's existing products, technology,

and services into new building classes, keeping up with the NCC changes over the last few years and expanding the use of timber in construction. As mass timber buildings continue to generate attention in the Australian market, Multinail Advance is focused on bringing more timber construction options for Multinail Fabricators to the residential, multi-storey, and mass timber construction market.

For Multinail Fabricators, the market has primarily been in the detached, semi-detached, and townhouse market. However, Multinail Advance is about taking the use of timber to higher multi-storey construction and incorporating a new range of products for larger timber members.

"The broader building industry still thinks that lightweight timbers can only be used in

detached and semi-detached buildings; however, we can go a lot higher," Travis Taylor, Chief Operating Officer, said.

"We are comfortable using small section timber in buildings up to 5-6 storeys high."

"Multinail Advance is developing new products along with new services and systems to enable our fabricator base to move more confidently in these areas and to promote their products and services in this market space."

DEVELOPMENT

While using timber in multi-storey residential builds is a more novel concept for Australian builders, it is not a new concept, with both the US and European markets already freely moving in this space.

"The Americans have been doing this for



Installation of Multinail advance pan head screws for testing.

forty years, so it is nothing new to them, but it is new to Australians,” Taylor said.

“It is starting to grow in Australia. Currently, we have several fabricators nationwide in each state who are excited about the development and ‘can’t wait to go higher’.

“The challenge is getting the building community comfortable with the changes and encouraging architects and builders to steer away from the traditional large section steel and concrete building. Getting them to swap for a different building material is where the hesitation can be, and that’s the challenge for us, as part of the timber industry, to overcome.

“It’s not like swapping from Apple to Samsung,” Taylor continued.

“It’s not just swapping a product for a product; it’s how the engineers and architects design the building, and following that, the builders in this market segment need to adjust to new trades and the increased speed of the project.

“For builders who are used to working with concrete and the established tempo of a concrete build, timber projects will be completed quicker, possibly with a smaller workforce and a faster follow-on trade process.

“I recognise it’s a big change, however, we have customers already doing four-story buildings and are actively looking for more projects,” Taylor said.

PRODUCTS AND DEVELOPMENT

Multinail Advance has several products available now, with more to be released in the coming months as they move towards a timber-based solution for multi-storey and mass timber construction.

EcoBrace, their latest product, is a timber portal that will provide a timber solution that aims to reduce most of the structural steel used in residential buildings.

“Initially, this is aimed at detached, semi-detached, and multi-residential buildings. Soon, we are going to start applying it to



Tensile test of Stronghold tie-down brackets with glulam.



Screw joint shear testing with glulam.

multi-level buildings,” Taylor said.

The portal system also expands into cathedral roofing, which can be obtained through customised design services. It can also be used in garages with roof and floor loads.

The second product is their Shortwall Bracing system, a steel bracing truss replacement. Currently, builders are using welded steel truss in short wall applications. Multinail Advance now has a comparable product to this, using standard GLT.

“This enables Multinail truss plants to supply more products to the build at once and not wait on third-party suppliers. This is a pain point for many builders, as you must get your frames from one place and your steel bracing trusses from another. What if your steel bracing trusses don’t turn up on time?”

Additionally, Multinail Advance will release a new tie-down system for high-wind applications. This system will be used to tie >>



Above: Moment test of EcoBrace knee joint with LVL.

down wall frame top plates to hanging beams and then to the slab. It removes the pain point of drilling through GLT or LVL hanging beams. It is expected to be available mid-year.

As for further steps, he says the next major development will be about light-weight timber bracing in multi-storey buildings and a mass timber connection range.

BUILDING THE FUTURE

Multinail Advance will find an increased place in the growing building market, particularly with the government's ambitious proposal to build 1.2 million houses.

"They are not going to do it in concrete; I don't think you are going to do it all in modular construction or panelised systems either, as the numbers required for the targets the government has set are ambitious," Taylor said.

"What I would like to see is the existing truss and frame network (of which there are some 300) who are already geared up in terms of equipment, technical staff, and construction knowledge, to start looking at different building types, the capability of the Frame and Truss sector for far too long has been generally overlooked by architects, engineers developers and builders when it comes to buildings outside of the detached, semi-detached and multi-residential sectors."

"Multinail Advance is working hard on

New products that save time, reduce costs, and offer environmental benefits, enhancing build efficiency and sustainability.



Above: Tensile test of EcoBrace column tie-down bracket.

bracing systems and tie-down systems, which we will release in the coming months to support this expansion."

The two products cited above will be available as of May via Multinail's extensive nationwide network of Fabricators.

"Detached and semi-detached housing is at its zenith. The Australian truss and frame industry is a well-oiled machine that manages quotes to detailing, manufacturing, and delivery. With what the rest of the Multinail group of companies will be releasing in the coming months and years, it will be even more efficient. The next major opportunity for the truss and frame sector is for townhouse, unit development either low-rise through to mid-rise construction and in hybrid buildings a combination of light weight and mass timber construction, where Multinail Advance has been focusing on for the last few years." Taylor continued.

With supply chains heavily impacted in the past few years, Multinail recognises the need for a more streamlined process for builders to ensure that builds don't become stagnant and build timelines blow out.

"We are trying to put more control back into the hands of truss manufacturers. They are a lot more capable than what the broader industry perceives, and it is about giving them more tools and systems to provide more confidence to builders in new markets who are thinking about swapping to timber."

Taylor notes that while Australia has seen an increase in timber used in larger buildings, it is primarily supplied by the mass timber industry. Despite Australia being relatively new to mass timber buildings, we already have an excellent industry of 4 suppliers.

"We are doing some fantastic work, Collingwood VIC, Bendigo Gov hub VIC, Monterey Building Kangaroo Point QLD, just to name a few buildings supplied by the local mass timber industry in the last few years alone. This goes a long way to increasing the confidence of the construction industry and the population in using timber in more construction types.

As much as these buildings are fantastic, they won't be the lion's share of the construction market as Australia aims to solve its housing problems. Under the DTS provisions in the NCC, timber won't be exposed, budgets for construction won't be as high, and the more efficient use of timber will be required. In some circumstances, mass timber will be required. In others, lightweight timbers will be the better option, ensuring mass timber is used where it is best combined with lightweight timbers that provide the most efficient use of timber," he said.

Multinail Advance

Multinail Advance is an exciting addition to the Multinail Brand. Our core focus is to introduce Multinail's extensive range of products and services to new markets while innovating and developing solutions tailored to both existing and emerging sectors.

Our primary focus includes multi-residential projects, mid-rise buildings, and mass timber construction.

Multinail Advance is committed to enhancing the competitive edge of our fabricators by expanding timber construction into new markets and contributing to the growth of the Australian timber industry.



Shortwall bracing

Short wall bracing using a pair of Stronghold tie-down brackets can provide various options depending on the bracing requirements, ranging from non-cyclonic to cyclonic regions.

- Tailored to fulfill the bracing requirements of open-plan housing, accommodating fewer internal walls and larger openings.
- Offers superior bracing capacity compared to conventional sheet bracing units.
- Requires fewer screws, reducing on-site labour.
- Available in standardised kits for easy installation.



Ecobrace

Simple and effective site-built portal for achieving loading bearing and/or wall bracing requirements in residential construction with superior capability for withstanding lateral loads.

- Timber portal solution for a large range of opening sizes, heights, and applications.
- Rigid frame provides high lateral capacities.
- Enables maximum portal openings in standard wall framing.
- Lighter and easier to handle than steel-braced wall frames.
- More economical solution for concrete anchors.
- Certification provided.





Above: Ecobrace is a simple and effective site-built portal for achieving loading bearing and/or wall bracing requirements in residential construction with superior capability for withstanding lateral loads.

THE TIMBER PATH FORWARD

Taylor believes that using timber is potentially one of the only ways the government could begin to achieve its proposed housing target and environmental goals at the same time.

He believes that comparing Australia to the US and European markets is not beneficial as they are climatically and architecturally different. Europe has a restricted building window because of the weather and requires lockup quicker than we do in Australia. The American housing market is massive, much of which is based on repeatable buildings, whereas Australia’s

building volumes are substantially smaller and infinitely more varied.

It’s a bright future for the dynamic family-owned business, with roots firmly anchored in the Australian timber construction industry and a heritage that extends over forty-seven years. During that time, the company has built an enviable culture of enthusiastic, committed staff vested in the success of Multinail fabricators throughout Australia. Their locally based teams are made up of highly skilled, passionate people with extensive experience and knowledge of the timber prefabrication industry.

Multinail is an Australian success story with a visionary focus on being the only company to provide the timber prefabrication industry with a fully integrated solution of Australian-made and supported structural building products, machinery, and software.

The superior quality of Multinail building products, machinery, and software doesn’t just happen overnight. It takes highly skilled, dedicated people working towards a common goal of ensuring everything they supply is produced to the highest possible standards of quality and performance.

The wealth of industry experience within Multinail ensures fabricators get the best from their partnerships. Whether advising on business development, productivity, upskilling staff or providing engineering support, a highly skilled, locally based team is ready to provide whatever service is required.

“The family culture at Multinail means we are adaptive and free of corporate constraints, creating a stimulating environment where innovation is alive in every division of the company. We encourage people to constantly seek solutions and advancements for the benefit of our fabricators.” Taylor summarised.

Multinail Advance is committed to enhancing the competitive edge of our fabricators by expanding timber construction into new markets and contributing to the growth of the Australian timber industry. **T**



Above: The Multinail Advance Team. Taking timber construction to new heights, Muhammad Iftikhar – Graduate Structural Engineer, Travis Taylor – CEO Multinail Advance, Chelsea Cheng – Structural Engineer.

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Still NTT

Meyer Timber's acquisition of Newcastle Timber Traders has enhanced both companies, but not changed this NSW builders' favourite. **By Donyale Harrison**

Terrigal is a gorgeous beachside spot between Sydney and Newcastle, but it wasn't the views or the tasty food that made this long lunch so memorable for Kent Powell, nor the years-long lead up to it.

Powell, national sales and marketing manager at Meyer Timber, was there to have a cuppa and a snack with Paul Hughes from Newcastle Timber Trading (NTT).

"We've had a long association with NTT," says Powell. "There's always been a really good culture fit between the two businesses, a similarity in the way we go about business with both customers and suppliers."

NTT had started as a wholesale timber and plywood service to the Newcastle region in 1983, then expanded its offering into engineered wood products in 1996. But the company had built a strong reputation as more than just a supplier: with its design service, its range of engineered wood products (particularly floors) and its focus on strong relationships, it had become an educational and supportive 'partner' to many local builders.

"Years ago, Paul mentioned that at some point he'd be exiting the industry," says Powell. "We didn't push, but we asked if he'd keep that discussion open with us as that date came closer. Last year, around August/September, we were having a Meyer Timber board meeting and the agenda item about possibly acquiring NTT one day came up again. I asked Dave [David Meyer, managing director at Meyer Timber] if I should see where Paul was at."

A quick phone call saw an invitation extended to pop up to the NSW Central Coast and grab a bite to eat.

"It started as a half-hour chat and turned into a three-hour discussion about business and the marketplace and how both businesses had got to where they were today," says Powell. "Before we knew it, the restaurant was politely asking us when we'd finish up because they needed to set up for dinner."

Both the Meyer and NTT teams felt the businesses were well positioned to work closely together going forward.

"Unfortunately, Paul wasn't 20 years younger, because we'd love to be in business together with him," says Powell. "He thought that Meyer would be a good fit for his team

moving forward. And that was always at the forefront of his mind: what would become of his staff when he stepped back, what would become of particularly his customers?"

"I felt it was such good luck to sit down with Paul for those hours. We joke that it was the quickest due diligence that may have ever been between two parties. It was certainly a very, very open three hours about key customers, suppliers and business philosophy and methodology.

"We said that we'd be indebted to him to have that opportunity to take NTT forward and we were able to assure Paul that the business would remain an active entity, not consumed into Meyer Timber. He liked what our vision was.

"Things moved pretty quickly after the lunch in Terrigal and both businesses saw reasons to accelerate the process rather than draw it out. From our side of the field, it was a very seamless acquisition with no surprises whatsoever."

While Meyer has bought NTT, don't think for a moment that NTT will now transition to just a Meyer depot in NSW.

Powell says, "The message that we're sending to market is that the company is 'still

NTT'. A big part of what we've actually acquired is the culture and the brand. That's why NTT has succeeded for so long in quite a competitive market where wholesale positions have only got bigger – they've retained a loyal, strong brand in the Newcastle and Northern Regions because of what the team brings to the market."

SUPPLYING NEWCASTLE'S NEEDS

With the sort of infrastructure that comes from having the largest population of any non-capital city in Australia but still beautiful suburbs and beaches and available sites for development, Newcastle is an obvious growth area for building supply. NTT has recognised this and built an enviable reputation in the area.

"It's a real no brainer that this is an area that requires investment and attention to the local market," says Powell.

"NTT has ingrained its brand into the builder level in Newcastle. We've spoken with regional tier-one builders who don't say they want particular brands, they say they want an NTT floor or an NTT design – just one of the reasons we're strongly holding on to that name."



Above: Some of the NTT production crew preparing ancillary Packs for local truss plants.

PHOTOS: COURTESY MEYER TIMBER AND NTT

NTT's already effective one-stop solution has been extended with the addition of Meyer products.



Above: The relationship between Meyer and NTT has been a natural fit from day one. (L-R) Kent Powell, Craig Kelly, John Kachel and Chris Kachel.

Powell emphasises that both teams have already benefitted from the acquisition. NTT never stopped producing what he calls “market-specific offerings” that have had real success in the region.

“For example, they continue to do double and triple laminations of LVL beams in-house, which other people might still have in their designs but leave for the builder to do on site. With NTT doing the job and delivering the completed beam to site, the quality standard is ensured and builders are able to get that bigger sized beam from their main supplier, with a single installation step.

The NTT design centre also has a novel approach. “Their team has a good number of local builders who regularly visit the design centre,” says Powell, “which doesn’t happen so often in the metro cities. It means the builders get educated on new products, new methodologies and so on, but also the designers get first-hand knowledge of the builders’ desires and concerns.

Since November, the two businesses have been working closely together to share knowledge and find efficiencies that will benefit both, with weekly visits across the various teams.

“We’re getting a good cross section of people together to share ideas,” Powell says. “Several of the things NTT does really well are also things that Meyer does really well. For example, we’ve always provided NTT access to our principal engineers for high level advice to help customers outside of the industry’s software parameters when required; now, while NTT will remain self-sufficient in their own designs, Meyer engineers George Dolezal and Afzal Laphir will be there as an overarching service for the NTT business. They’ve already been sitting down with the NTT design team; if there’s an update at Meyer Timber, there’s an update at NTT.

“When it comes to the timber categories that underpin NTT, most of those are ones

where Meyer Timber is already strong and has investment, so we benefit from their cult following and they benefit from the addition of other Meyer Timber categories to the NTT suite of products.”

The result is an extension of NTT’s already effective one-stop solution offer. Meyer’s renowned prefab range including roof, floor and stair cassettes will become part of NTT’s engineered wood portfolio, and the business’s offer to the F&T and merchant sectors will be expanded with new product categories including pine framing, treated pine, sheet products, pre-primed outdoor products and Meyer’s Merbau range.

“When you look across the businesses and economies of scale, it’s clear that the two businesses will only become stronger,” says Powell. “Unsurprisingly, there are already dual existing suppliers into both businesses. So already from the supply side, with just business as usual, opportunities have opened up in both directions. >>



Above: NTT has made a strategic expansion into increased framing pine to complement its EWP sales, which has already proven successful. **Above right:** As the logo makes clear, the business is still NTT!



We see a lot of Meyer Timber in Craig – in all of their people – but the commitment and drive in Craig is strong, as it needs to be for anyone in that position. John Kachel has a long, very good reputation in the Newcastle area and is staying on as the leading sales rep, working closely with Meyer Timber Sales Manager Daniel Wagus on customer transitions and strategy when needed. The rest of the team remains, and it won't be long before we'll be looking at what type of people they need to help them handle growth."

While the acquisition is a great decision on the business side, on the culture side it's an even more natural fit, with the two companies already so aligned in their strategies and ability to retain long term committed staff.

"We use similar terminology in the way we talk about both customers and suppliers," says Powell. "Both of us like to think of ourselves as solution-based sales companies. And that's not just the products in day-to-day trading, but also service solutions.

"We're just really adding some support and maybe a little bit of extra firepower to see what level of growth Craig and his team can experience next. We think we've been pretty good at that in our own business, so we should be able to help NTT do that."

Meyer Timber's pattern of steady, solid growth bodes well for that plan. In addition to its expansion into NSW from Victoria, the company has operated an owned Meyer Timber site in Brisbane since 2017 and will continue to explore more opportunities as they arise.

"This isn't Dave's first time at the rodeo," says Powell. "We'd like to think that every time we've made a mistake, we've learned, and we can carry those learnings into NTT. It's almost certain there'll be a roadblock along the way that we haven't seen before. But there's plenty that we know how to get around already and there's such a breadth of experience across both companies that we'll be able to manage anything new.

"I'm positive that our Terrigal meal won't be our last catch-up with Paul and I'm looking forward to sitting down with him again and benefiting from his wealth of knowledge and experience. I know he's keen to revisit the business once he gives his staff some time to settle in." **T**

For more details on NTT and its products, visit www.timbertrading.com.au

"It's early days and we know there will be more benefits to gain as we continue to work our way through the things you learn in those first nitty gritty months after an acquisition. But there's certainly been no surprises out of left field."

Powell emphasises that the learnings have been in both directions.

"NTT is a strong panels business and we're already seeing Meyer Timber NSW benefit from NTT's experience and service model for the plywood business," he says.

"Going in the other direction, NTT will become the strong home of our TimberTech decking line for both the Newcastle and Sydney regions. We're looking to enhance each other's business and the Meyer Timber site in New South Wales is physically quite full. But thanks to the assistance Meyer is giving NTT, its site now has capacity. So NTT is likely to become the owner of TimberTech decking in New South Wales and we'll lean on them for support for that product, whereas they'll be leaning on us for support in other products.

"It's a way of showing their customer base that there is a real progression in product category for NTT with this ownership change and to give NTT further identity beyond engineered wood. So it's exciting for us both."

CONSISTENCY AND GROWTH

Back in 2007, Meyer acquired Structalam Timber Products, another engineered wood specialist in NSW. Since then, the company (now Meyer Timber NSW) has continued to thrive, now with a wider range of timber products in its offer.

"Structalam and NTT are very similar models," says Powell. "Without being perfect, we think the second time around we've learned enough to make this very smooth, and that's what's playing out so far.

"NTT keeps their own proven systems and gains all of the Meyer Timber buying power, IT and further systemisation to make their lives easier. And it's very fair to say there's already been learnings in the other direction: NTT is without doubt a clever, savvy business."

While there are multiple synergies on the buying and management side, Meyer have been careful not to intrude on the staffing side.

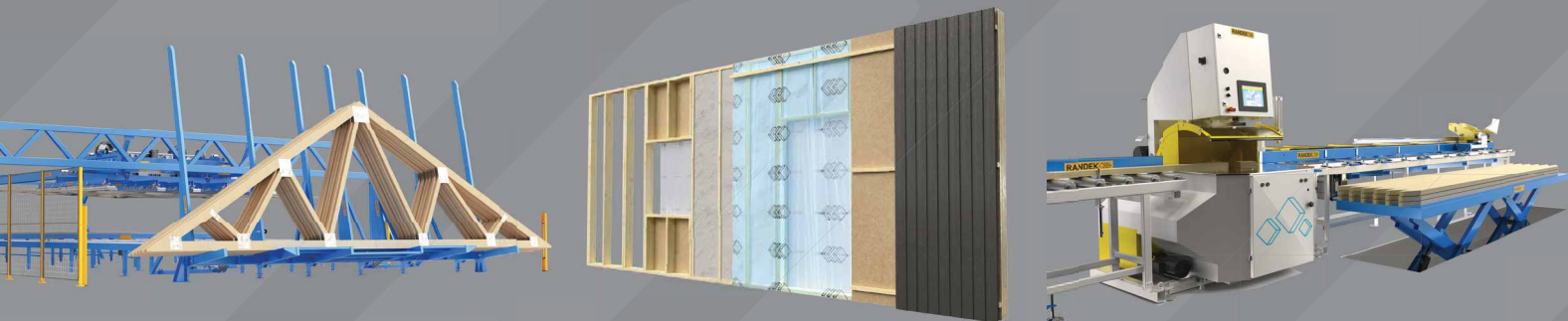
"We're not looking for any dramatic staff consolidations at all," Powell says. "We want to keep the Newcastle business strong with the intent to grow it. And we're hopeful of sourcing good local people to come into the business up there.

"NTT's manager Craig Kelly moves forward as the new general manager. He's been a tremendous servant to the business.

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Electric forklifts and battery recycling

As Australia develops the infrastructure required for electrification, Combilift is ready to deliver powerful improvements to Aussie warehouses. **By Martin McVicar CEO**

Combilift Founder and CEO, Martin McVicar, says it is vitally important for his company to make a positive impact on the environment and its customers' health. "For Combilift as a company, we're very focused on how we make our vehicles more environmentally friendly for our customers," Martin says. "In the last five years, roughly 90 percent of our R&D investment has gone into electric power equipment". Some of the new electric Combilift models have included the Combi-CB70E and the Combi-CUBE, both of which address their own unique needs. The former is the market's shortest 7-ton capacity counterbalance forklift, with the ability to handle heavier loads while taking up less space. The latter has also been designed to allow for narrower aisles, but comes with an optional Dynamic 360 steering system, for seamless change of direction.

Combilift Country Manager for Australia, Chris Littlewood, says the company's research and that of industry experts point to Australia's desire for accelerated electrification. "The country has been building in readiness for this next wave of technological innovation. The infrastructure

is being put in place and most businesses are trying hard to reduce their emissions," Chris says. A 2023 report from commercial real estate company, JLL, revealed that 53% of Australia's top 100 industrial and logistics companies have net-zero targets. With Combilift's help, it's hoped that every one of these businesses can achieve their targets, according to Martin. "[Electrification] has been our focus for the last five years, as well as how to measure the efficiency of those trucks," Martin says. "As a company, we're inherently focussed on sustainable solutions. And by that, I mean we're focussed on making vehicles that are more environmentally friendly to use, as well as vehicles that enable our customers to make their warehouse utilisation more environmentally friendly."

THE GREAT BATTERY DEBATE

To power Combilift's electrification, Martin has remained a strong voice in favour of lead-acid batteries, despite the automotive industry opting for lithium. This is due to a range of factors, he explains. "In the car industry, the lithium battery has become the

norm for electric vehicles, but no one has really figured out how to recycle them effectively," Martin says. "In seven to 10 years, recycling these lithium batteries could become a challenge if there's no solutions found. "On the other hand, lead-acid batteries last for much longer and they're 80% recyclable. So, while we wait for more environmentally friendly alternatives, we feel lead-acid batteries are best."

Never one to let down a customer, Combilift will satisfy those who request a lithium battery. However, there is one more reason the company opts for lead-acid over lithium. "Lithium batteries are lighter, which is why the automotive business tends to use lithium – they want the vehicle to be as light and aerodynamic as possible," Martin says. "But in the forklift industry, no matter what the model is, our vehicles need counterweight to lift the load. So, lead-acid batteries act as that load, instead of adding more steel."

REBUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME

As Combilift continues to innovate and improve its sustainability, it intends on recycling more than batteries. Martin revealed that the lead-acid batteries won't be the only components being rebuilt in the near future. "Our old premise is only four kilometres away, and we still own them. So, our intention over the coming years is to set that up as a rebuild centre," he says. As a proud Monaghan local, this development is sure to bring further jobs and revenue to the community – a value that Martin has maintained throughout Combilift's proud 25-year tenure in Ireland. "I grew up in this area, and I've always desired to stay here. So, to set up a manufacturing company or a business in your hometown gives you great satisfaction," he says. To Martin, it seems, there could be no more noble cause than to maintain the sustainability of his local community as well as the environment. **T**



For more information visit www.combilift.com

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Photo: The Northshore Pavillion



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“The Bond” timber beyond the ordinary

Innovation in protective timber coatings to meet the challenge: safeguarding and enhancing exposed mass timber builds. **By Intergrain Trade & Industrial**

THE PROJECT

The Bond is a recently completed \$59.7m seven storey building showcasing the stunning possibilities of modern timber design. With a mass timber glue laminated (glulam) frame, and floors in roof panels in Cross Laminated Timber (CLT), the construction boasts more than 10,500 square metres of space for offices, healthcare providers and retail.

Architects Fitzpatrick + Partners worked

with engineers, TTW, to create a design that would allow light to flood every floor, with the timber frame visible through full height glass panels. The developer, Mulpha Developments, embraced the idea of incorporating the organic charm of raw timber and open views of greenery, especially since The Bond houses specialist medical facilities. Several remarkable studies have shown that buildings with high ‘biophilic’ qualities promote better

concentration and productivity for workers, and faster rates of recovery for patients. Like Murdoch University in Perth, The Bond boasts a future-forward timber focused design that is a win for both human wellbeing and environmental sustainability.

THE CHALLENGE

Careful planning was required to protect the timber from degradation and weathering during the construction process. Prefabricated in Austria, the timber components were shipped to a sheltered holding yard, with sections transported to site on the day of installation. Crucially, all timber required a high-performance coating that would provide protection from extreme UV exposure while enhancing the beauty of the wood grain.

THE INTERGRAIN SOLUTION

Intergrain State Sales Manager, Noel Cumberland worked closely with Michel Maingard of Buildcorp to specify a coatings system that would deliver the desired finish. Whilst in some cases the weathering of timber was unavoidable, the aim was to restore, highlight and protect the wood with a subtle matt finish.

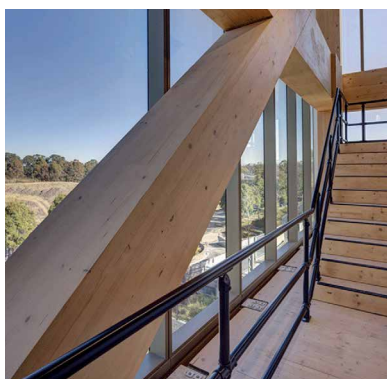
The first step was to remove all surface contaminants on the timber with Intergrain UltraPrep Timber Cleaner, a high strength treatment developed specifically for efficient rejuvenation of weather stained timber. Once completely dry, Intergrain UltraClear Exterior Matt was applied. This tough finish enhances the colour and grain of the timber, providing superior protection against weathering and extreme UV exposure. Unlike traditional oil-based timber clear coatings, this water-based formula has been developed for Australian conditions, is low in Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) and will not yellow over time.

THE RESULTS

“Intergrain timber coatings technology successfully prepared and enhanced the



Above: The Bond foyer proudly displaying the building name on pine feature wall. Twelve months after opening, with the Intergrain UltraClear maintaining the original charters of the timber.



Above: The bond building showcases floor-to-ceiling with mass timber blocks encompassed in a glass exterior cladding, allowing a full view of this luxurious mass timber from inside and out.

engineered timber, creating a high-performance aesthetic finish that will last," Noel explains.

"Importantly, we were able to work closely with Buildcorp and other contractors to restore and protect the timber during the construction process efficiently."

The Bond is a stunning example of the use of engineered timber in multi-level construction, prompting many architects to think beyond traditional concrete and steel designs. Timber simply requires some extra preparation and planning to retain structural integrity and protect the surface in the building process.

A stunning example of the use of engineered timber.

Project architect Jessica Rodham explained why she believes timber construction is the way of the future, saying "We are always trying to propose to our partners that they should consider timber or a hybrid system of timber and steel because

of the environmental and sustainability benefits and the carbon that can be absorbed back from the environment."

"The biophilic qualities mean people also have higher productivity and find it easier to focus and report better levels of concentration. As well, the timber can be re-used afterwards."* **T**

Further information contact the Intergrain Trade & Industrial team for expert product knowledge, service and support. Call our Help Line on 1800 630 285 or visit intergrain.com.au/project-gallery/ for more inspiration.



Woodwise: White Cypress

Exploring the timeless appeal, benefits and unique qualities of White Cypress.

Nestled within the forests of Victoria, Central Queensland, and Western New South Wales, sits a gem of the softwood timber world - White Cypress Pine (WCP). Revered for its versatility, durability, and distinct aesthetics, this species has been a cornerstone of Australian craftsmanship. This species grows to a height of up to 25 meters and has a diameter of around 0.6 meters. Whilst the sap wood has a creamy-white band, the heart ranges in colour from light yellow to orange through to light brown. The grain is generally straight with a very fine and even texture. White Cypress Pine (*Callitris glaucophylla*) has natural oils which enhance durability and imbue White Cypress with excellent resistance to decay, rot, and termites, and has a life expectancy above ground of more than 40 years with up to 25 years in ground making it a favoured choice for outdoor projects.

HISTORY

The story of White Cypress Pine intertwines with the rich tapestry of Australia's indigenous cultures. They utilised its timber for a range of purposes, from crafting tools and weapons to constructing shelters. Its resilience in diverse environmental conditions made it an invaluable resource for survival.

With European settlement, WCP gained further prominence. Settlers quickly recognized its potential for building materials, fencing, and furniture. Its natural resistance to decay and insect infestation made it ideal for outdoor applications, enduring harsh Australian climates with minimal maintenance.

CHARACTERISTICS

One of its standout features is its remarkable dimensional stability. White Cypress exhibits minimal shrinkage and swelling, even when exposed to fluctuating moisture levels, making it well-suited for flooring and decking applications. Its workability further adds to its allure, as it responds well to cutting, sanding, and finishing techniques, allowing craftsmen to unleash their creativity and is a popular choice in joinery.

Beyond traditional applications, WCP has found its way into contemporary designs and artistic endeavours. From sculptural installations to bespoke furniture pieces, its unique grain patterns and creamy complexion lend an air of sophistication to any setting. Moreover, its sustainable sourcing adds an eco-friendly dimension, aligning with modern preferences for environmentally conscious materials.

As the world grapples with environmental

challenges, the sustainability of timber resources has come under scrutiny. Fortunately, WCP stands as a beacon of sustainability in the timber industry. Harvested from carefully managed forests or sustainably cultivated plantations, it offers a renewable alternative to less eco-friendly materials.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

In addition to its practical and aesthetic merits, WCP also offers health and well-being benefits. Unlike synthetic materials that emit harmful chemicals, this natural timber exudes a sense of warmth and authenticity, creating a conducive environment for relaxation and rejuvenation. The calming effect of wooden interiors can reduce stress levels and enhance overall well-being, making WCP an excellent choice for residential and commercial spaces alike.

Beyond its tangible benefits, WCP carries a cultural legacy that resonates through generations. It embodies the spirit of resilience, adaptability, and craftsmanship that defines Australia's heritage. From its humble origins in indigenous cultures to its widespread use in modern applications, this resilient species continues to captivate craftsmen, architects, and designers alike. With its timeless appeal, environmental sustainability, and inherent beauty, White Cypress Pine remains a testament to the enduring bond between humanity and nature. **T**



Further information:

With thanks to Wood Solutions
www.woodsolutions.com.au/wood-species/softwood/cypress-white and wood database

PHOTOS: (TOP) DAVID L. YOUNG/SHUTTERSTOCK; (INSET) IMAGE COURTESY OF INTERGRAN

One source.
Many resources.

Timber beyond the ordinary



A stunning engineered timber frame is the hero of this innovative multi-level building in Sydney with all timber enhanced and protected with an Intergrain® water based coating system.

Firstly, the surface was prepared with **Intergrain UltraPrep™ Timber Cleaner**, a high strength treatment designed to restore weathered timber, followed by the application of **Intergrain UltraClear® Exterior Matt**, enhancing the wood grain and providing protection from extreme UV exposure.

The result is an aesthetic finish that lasts, prompting architects to consider engineered timber for the environmental and sustainability benefits it can provide.

Read how the ordinary became extraordinary at The Bond on pages 38 & 39 or scan the QR code to visit intergrain.com.au/project-gallery/the-bond/



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TRADE & INDUSTRIAL

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Loading and unloading bays with one of Programmed Timber's stock storage locations, awaiting the production process.

Programmed Timber's integrated approach

A long-term commitment to innovation, sustainability and reliability. **By Campbell McInnes**

Innovation, sustainability, and reliability - these are the pillars upon which Programmed Timber Supplies stands tall in Australia's timber industry landscape. Owner Warwick Drysdale explained, their recent rebranding, shedding the 'Supplies' to reflect their integrated role in timber resource management, processing, and distribution. Programmed Timber as it is now known reaffirms its commitment to delivering value across the entire supply chain.

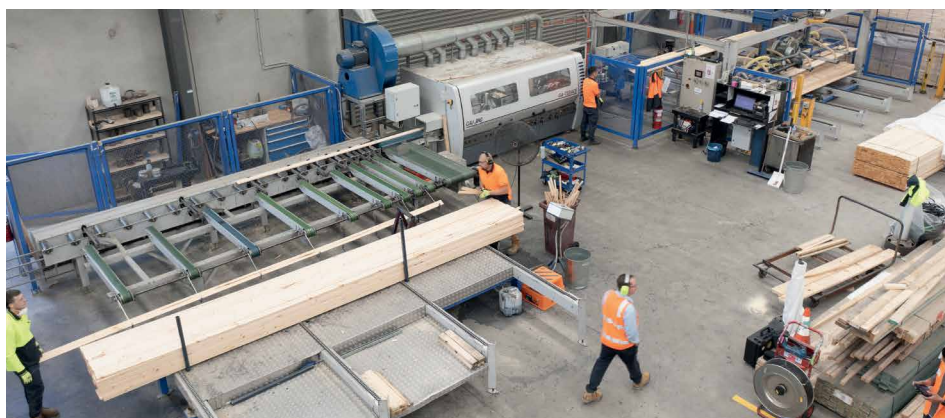
As I delved into the heart of Programmed Timber, it's evident that their 25-year journey isn't just about producing timber; it's about maximizing the potential of every wood fibre while ensuring zero waste. The importance of achieving this milestone isn't merely about

environmental stewardship; Drysdale advised, "it's a testament to the company's dedication to efficiency and resource optimization. By turning every residue into a valuable asset, Programmed Timber sets a benchmark for sustainability in the industry" and one that Drysdale is very proud of. Furthermore, Drysdale added, "we must provide a positive advantage to both our suppliers and customers - they must all receive a value benefit when product is handled through our operation."

EMBRACING MODERN CONSTRUCTION METHODS

The timber sector is undergoing a transformative phase, marked by the rise of

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) such as off-site and mass timber construction methods which are gaining momentum. Drysdale explained, "While this sector is still finding its way, it has an undeniable opportunity to be a significant contributor to meeting our housing needs. The growth in this modular construction using DfMA (Design for Manufacturing and Assembly) principles along with traditional Frame & Truss moving more into a panelised format will see volumes and more streamlined systems develop. Pre-cut or even pre-fabricated components supplied ready for installation in the factory is a proven winner as seen in all other production line type industries e.g., automotive and electronics." The inevitable 'less sites and more cranes' trend in construction will demand better upstream supply options. Here, Programmed Timber doesn't just supply timber; it envisions and contributes to the future of construction through its commitment to offer pre-cut, ready to assemble timber components. With a keen eye on emerging trends and technologies, Programmed Timber is poised to seize new opportunities, where pre-cut components play a pivotal role.



Above: High speed planer, with its automatic in-feed and quality control on the out-feed.

LOGISTICS, INFRASTRUCTURE AND A SUSTAINABLE OPERATION

Located in Western Sydney, Programmed >>

PHOTOS: ARTONE

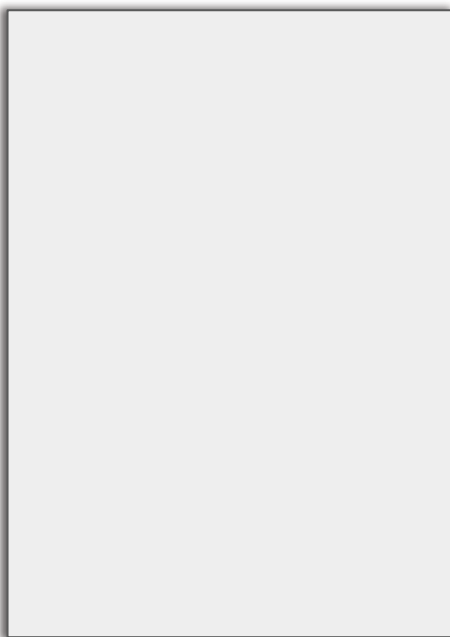


The staff



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The equipment lease



The waste bin &
contents

It's about what you **don't need**
- to be able to **do more**

Programmed
Timber 

Pre-cut timber components

Use your current resources more effectively

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Timber faces the challenge of urban costs, but it turns this obstacle into an advantage through streamlined logistics and inventory management. Serving primarily domestic markets, Programmed Timber ensures a reliable supply chain across New South Wales, ACT, Victoria, and Queensland, leveraging its strategic location and robust transport infrastructure.

Moreover, Programmed Timber's investment in solar power underscores its dedication to sustainability and cost-efficiency. By harnessing renewable energy, Programmed Timber not only increases its carbon sequestration footprint, but also insulates itself from rising energy costs, reinforcing its position as a forward-thinking industry leader.

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Labour shortages have plagued many industries, but Programmed Timber has adeptly navigated these challenges by investing in technology and fostering flexibility in its processes. Drysdale explained, "In manufacturing, it is always understanding the available technology then utilising its capacity to the greatest possible extent". One of the best examples of this is with the scanning technology we have employed in our plant, through our MicroTec scanner. Although this technology is becoming more widely implemented globally, it is how it is used and understanding the full capabilities. The technicians from the European company who installed the equipment were impressed by the extent of the capacity to which our plant would be utilising the scanner. Programmed Timber are only one of a few companies around the world that are using this technology to achieve full wood fibre utilisation across a range of inputs to manufacture totally 100% fit-for-purpose timber components for widespread applications over numerous industry sectors." With high-tech machinery driving efficiency and accuracy, Programmed

Timber not only ensures optimal timber utilization but also creates a conducive work environment for its staff.

By embracing automation and robotics, Programmed Timber not only mitigates labour concerns but also sets new benchmarks for reliability and precision. Drysdale said "It is not just zero waste in terms of volume but also in terms of utility to application. A generality across the industry is to maximise or best optimise volume return but we go further, much further. The optimisation of wood fibre grade/utility along with volume optimisation is the goal to which we strive." Furthermore, the inclusion of robotics into the production process has certainly improved the work experience for the on-floor workers at Programmed Timber, as this reduces the manual labour requirements and therefore reduces the risk of possible injury to staff and has the added benefit of providing an atmosphere in the production areas that staff are part of a sophisticated full-scale facility.

Ligna Fair in Hannover Germany is a machinery expo that showcases all the latest technology, which Programmed Timber visit bi-annually. As regular attendees and known for their own innovation, Programmed Timber are well known to many exhibitors and are always willing to enter into discussions which invariably both parties are able to gain valuable information. AI and machine learning is being introduced more into the software algorithms so better total wood fibre optimisation can occur. Just 'chopping up wood' is almost extinct in most global markets. As technology continues to change and improve, it is important to stay up to date, visiting Ligna is part of this process.

CUSTOMER-CENTRIC APPROACH

What sets Programmed Timber apart is not just its products but its unwavering commitment to customer satisfaction. With a diverse range of over 700 SKUs tailored to

various industries, Programmed Timber caters to a wide spectrum of clients, from multinational corporations to small local businesses. Drysdale explained, "The old saying of I'd rather be the innovator than the imitator, is true to our view. We offer specialist process and supply to meet the customer's needs. We know what can and can't be done. We don't make promises we can't keep, through all market cycles. Reliable supply of fit-for-purpose product on time, every time from a committed manufacturer that has broad industry support which has been formed through honest dealings – is just what we do." By offering dependable supply, Programmed Timber allows its customers to focus on their core competencies, confident in the reliability of their timber solutions.

As the demand for all wood fibre grows disproportionately to domestic resource availability, there is an absolute need to ensure we achieve the best outcome from our forest resources. This is something that Programmed Timber has already been doing for the past 25 years. The supply imbalance over the next decade and beyond will allow Programmed Timber to continue to expand on the work they have commenced on. Drysdale explained "We have a responsibility to gain the maximum benefit from the resources that have been entrusted to us. Therefore, utilizing the right piece of timber in the right application is all part of what our industry needs to get better at."

Programmed Timber exemplifies the convergence of innovation, sustainability, and reliability in the timber industry. With a steadfast commitment to excellence as well as a proactive approach to emerging trends, and finding solutions to customer's needs, Programmed Timber is not just a supplier of timber but a partner in progress, shaping the future of construction and resource management in Australia and beyond. **T**

For more, visit www.pttimbers.com.au



Above: Robot, Fanuc R-2000ic 165F in action, making light, speedy work of packing and strapping.



Above: Snapshot of the MicroTec scanning machine's display screen, capturing the rapid scanning process of each timber board.

PHOTOS: ARTONE

Trust a Truss

Can you trust a truss? The answer is an overwhelming yes! **By Paul Davis**

I estimate that there are about two hundred million nailplated timber trusses in service in Australia – which use billions of structural components in their construction. And, overwhelmingly, they are performing beautifully!

If good performance is the rule, for every rule there is an exception. Of course we don't want badly performing trusses, so it's worth looking at the odd case that goes wrong.

BUCKLING OR A CHANGE IN DIRECTION

There is a maxim in structural engineering that “structures fail either by buckling or at a change in direction of force”. What that means, is that members almost never fail by a simple snapping. Rather it's either failure as a joint (a change in direction) or by buckling which is a lateral or twisting movement of a member.

So, in the context of timber trusses, we are clearly talking about a failure at a truss joint or by buckling of a member. Last issue I talked about lateral torsional buckling of steel beams. This, and related phenomenon of compression buckling, occurs in trusses as well. It's worthwhile thinking about all the different scenarios where buckling might occur, so that we can avoid them in design and construction!

The photo in this article shows a classic opportunity for buckling. This is a parallel cord girder which has been installed as part of an addition to a building. For complicated reasons that aren't really important here, there are no rafters or battens sitting on the horizontal top chord in the area photographed. Over the years I have seen this sort of problem, and associated failures, where there's an unusual use of a truss. The other main cluster of similar issues is when a rafter is pitched off a top chord to form a verandah roof or a bell-roof. Often this is part of an extension. Under the rafter, if there are no roofing battens (which is common because there's no roofing to support) then that top member, which is typically in compression, is supremely vulnerable to buckling.



Above: The girder top chord was designed for 600mm restraints but it's more like 3m!

FAILURES

Another scenario where there used to be a rash of failures is the horizontal top chord of truncated girders. These rely on the jack rafters to laterally restrain the horizontal top cord against buckling. As you know, the rafter and the HTC only contact at a point and if the fixing here is only skew nails, then often they have poor embedment in the jack or TG. In response to this sort of failure happening, the Australian standard (AS4440) and the nail plate manufacturers' instructions now require this connection to be triple gripped.

A whole separate class of poor lateral restraints leading to member buckling is where roof battens are present but they do not give adequate lateral restraint to truss top chords. This has happened in the past with tile roof battens (because the tile battens are generally such crappy timber that the nails split out of the end of the batten or where the batten fixing simply misses the truss underneath. This issue has largely been fixed because the truss standard now requires every second tile batten to be ignored for the calculation of buckling capacity.

Another in the batten class of issues, is when steel top hat battens are fixed through

the top of the top hat rather than the wings that are in direct contact with the truss chord. In this case there is just too much flexibility in the screw or nail fixing to resist lateral buckling loads because the shaft travels through space between the top of the batten and the top cord.

The final class of situations where buckling occurs is when there is poor overall roof bracing. Historically, when trusses were first introduced, mostly gable roofs were built but only timber diagonal bracing was used. There were a bunch of cases where a whole run of standard truss top chords buckled as a group. You could tell because there was a waviness in the tile lines – or the roof was in a heap on the ground! I still on occasions see these kinds of failures in more modern roofs when the speedbrace is poorly installed (and particularly if it's poorly connected at the end) or not installed at all.

Despite all the nasty means of failures that I describe above, remember that overwhelmingly you can trust a truss. They are solid and stable, durable and dependable, resilient and reliable, tough and time-tested! **T**



Paul Davis is an independent structural engineer managing his own consulting firm Project X Solutions Pty Ltd. The views in this column are Paul's and do not reflect the opinions of *TimberTrader News*.
Phone: 02 4576 1555 | Email: paul@projectxsolutions.com.au

Ramping up to build more homes

Henley townhouses in Berwick VIC front view.



Creating a pathway for Off-site Timber Construction

By Afzal Laphir, Principal Engineer, Meyer Timber Pty Ltd

Off-site construction has become a dominant topic over the past decade, with the focus shifting from its real meaning to an understanding of its benefits, necessity, and now to “how we can make it work?”.

This method of construction has been identified as a pre-requisite for meeting the global demand for housing and in an Australian context, it's crucial for fulfilling the targeted construction of 240,000 homes annually. We are now required to build more homes per year than we have ever done before and meeting this demand hinges on embracing off-site construction more widely and ramping up the capacity of prefabrication.

In our recent piece titled “Living the Dream,” my colleague George delved into breaking down barriers to off-site construction, offering insights into achieving design repeatability and simplicity. In this article, I aim to further the discussion by examining the challenges faced by this method of construction and proposing ways to enhance industry acceptance and strengthen the supply chain.

CHALLENGES

There are many challenges and misconceptions that off-site construction is currently faced with, which are impeding its much-needed growth. These include, on the one hand, unfavourable regulatory systems, cautious lending authorities and insurance providers, and on the other hand, uncertainty of future work and a lack of awareness that the role off-site construction can play in dealing with labour scarcity, material shortage and build speed. There is also an apparent misconception in Australia that prefabricated buildings are somewhat

inferior in quality and appearance to those built on site.

In general, most of Australia enjoys mild weather conditions which has traditionally allowed construction to proceed smoothly year-round, minimizing weather-related interruptions. As such, there hasn't been as much urgency to adopt off-site construction methods to mitigate weather-related delays. However, with climate conditions becoming less predictable, this mindset is gradually shifting.

Let's probe deeper into these challenges.

REGULATORY SYSTEMS

Australia's building codes and regulatory systems are formulated around conventional construction methods or practices. However, this approach poses challenges in accepting off-site construction methods, with the existing frameworks often leading to time-consuming and costly approval processes, riddled with inconsistencies.

For example, deviating from the “deemed-to-satisfy” provisions in the NCC requires a performance solution for each change within a specific project. As this requirement applies even if the change is the same from project to project, it makes adaptations specific to off-site more costly and difficult to justify on some projects. It must be stated that this issue is more prevalent in multi-storey multi-residential buildings than in a row of townhouses, where fire and acoustic requirements are of greater importance.

In light of these challenges, it was pleasing to note that Building Ministers from all jurisdictions recently convened and pledged to collaborate in streamlining regulations to facilitate the expansion of Australia's modular

and off-site construction industry.

The government's acknowledgment should pave the way for the Australian Building Codes Board to collaborate closely with industry bodies and jurisdictions to alleviate barriers to adopting off-site construction. Consequently, the upcoming edition of the National Construction Code (NCC) is anticipated to include reforms related to off-site construction. A draft version of the NCC is slated for release on May 1, 2024, inviting public comment and feedback until July 1, 2024.

On a further note, the NSW government released a position paper in November last year, through the initiation of HIA, on the topic of “Proposed regulation of prefabricated building work”. One of the aims of this proposal is to develop a manufacturer certification scheme to suit the specific needs of prefabrication and thereby give confidence for building surveyors and certifiers to approve the finished product.

FINANCING AND INSURANCE

Besides the challenges posed by building regulations, another significant hurdle confronting off-site construction today is the absence of a clear distinction between traditional methods and prefabricated/modular construction when it comes to securing funding.

In traditional house builds, financing typically follows a phased approach, releasing funds as construction milestones are achieved, such as pouring concrete slabs, erecting frames, and completing the entire structure. In contrast, off-site construction reduces the on-site work to a simple installation process, eliminating gradual progression. This necessitates upfront funding for manufacturers or builders.

Because most construction work takes place in factories, lending institutions are

often hesitant to finance such projects since it complicates repossession procedures in case of bankruptcy. Unlike on-site construction, where another builder can take over, factory-based construction presents hurdles.

Security and insurance are crucial to address this issue, yet insuring building works in a factory setting is costly. Without adequate insurance, buyers and financiers lack protection, often rendering the project unviable from the outset.

As off-site construction and modular housing in Australia is expected to grow rapidly over the next 10 years, it is highly likely that the major banks and insurance providers will develop products that address the above concerns to support off-site construction. As an example, NAB has recently indicated it will be working through the process on making financing easier for modular buildings.

BUSINESS MINDSET

The current building industry has been relying heavily on labour-intensive on-site processes that are associated with low margins and low throughput. Also, traditionally the contractor is removed from the design phase and is expected to build what's been designed.

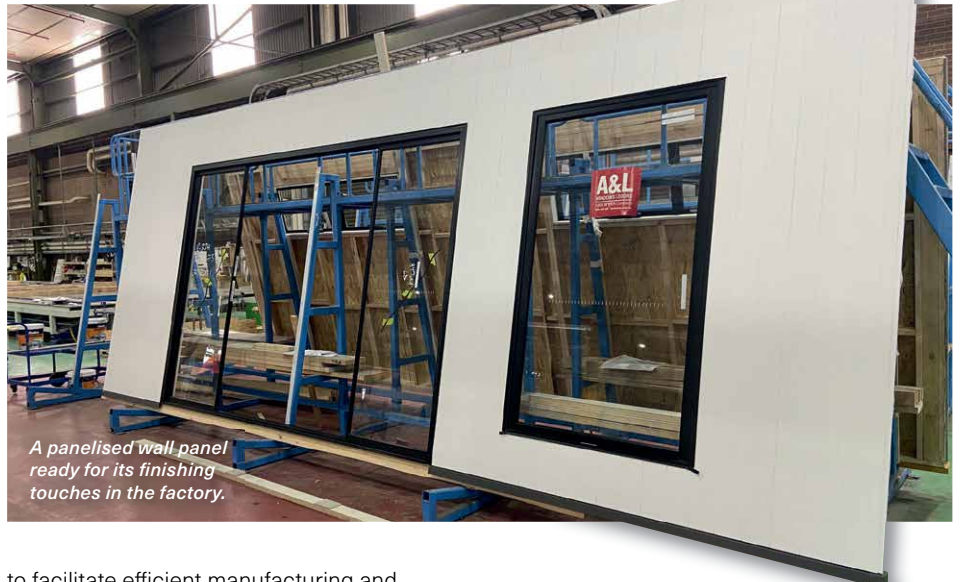
In contrast, off-site construction relies on a more automated, capital-intensive model, based in factories, and requiring continuous throughput and early involvement of the contractor. There is a need for a substantial investment in new technology, facilities and equipment for adopting off-site construction.

The challenge for potential off-site manufacturers is to embrace this shift in the business mindset, particularly given the difficulty in securing financing and insurance as we discussed above. How can we facilitate this investment?

For starters, ensuring a degree of certainty of future work and reducing barriers to adoption are crucial. Recent governmental efforts should contribute positively in this regard. It's important to acknowledge that the success of off-site construction depends not solely on manufacturers but also on developers, clients, builders, and design consultants. Effective collaboration among all stakeholders from the outset of the project is essential. This ensures that critical design concepts are established early on



For more information on this topic, contact Afzal Lahir via email at AfzalL@meyertimber.com.au



A panelised wall panel ready for its finishing touches in the factory.

to facilitate efficient manufacturing and assembly in a factory setting.

This does not have to be done in one great leap. Gradual moves into prefabrication are already happening, with builders using floor and roof cassettes in conjunction with their wall frames. The next step may be to line the walls rather than create a fully sealed wall. Each builder (and manufacturer) will have a different appetite as to how far to go in each step. The shrewd business will be able to find customers that align with their aspirations.

SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

One approach to build confidence is to raise awareness through showcasing timber building projects that have been successfully completed using off-site construction methods. By highlighting real-world examples of how off-site construction has been effectively utilized to deliver projects on time, within budget, and with high quality, you can help to dispel misconceptions and demonstrate the tangible benefits of this approach. In addition to raising awareness and understanding among industry professionals, it also helps to educate the



Installation of a fully completed front end module.

general public about the potential of off-site construction.

The prefabricated timber townhouse projects completed in Victoria by Timber Building Systems (TBS), in partnership with Henley, is a prime example of a success story. They have completed over 30 town homes already and an assured pipeline of work means they will be building two a week for the next 15 months.

This partnership has given TBS the reassurance of future work, which meant they can focus on investing on people and processes, to continuously improve their product. On the other hand, Henley has benefitted through significant time savings and improved quality. There are a few other companies across Australia who have achieved similar success.

By continuing to showcase success stories in this space, similar to TBS, we can help address any scepticism or resistance and pave the way for greater acceptance and implementation of off-site construction practices in future projects.

Building a home on site is akin to a bespoke construction, even though the model may be repeated. The industrial revolution has shown us that the speed and efficiency resulting from factory construction greatly increases the number of units that can be made. Housing needs to migrate to a more factory-based product, and with the issues above being worked on we should see changes in the near future. Watch this space closely as if you turn away for too long there may be a pre-fabricated home there when you look back. **T**



Meyer 
TIMBER



Frame & Truss Manufacturer’s Association of Australia National Conference

Conference report. **By Kersten Gentle**

When the only complaint is the golf drinks cart was too slow, you know you’ve just had a ripper of an event!

For the first time in 10 years, FTMA Australia took their conference out of Queensland, returning to where it all started in Victoria.

FTMA isn’t keen on holding events in capital cities, so we decided to take the conference to the city of Geelong in Regional Victoria and what a great choice that was.

The conference was held at the newly refurbished Geelong Arts Centre which was only opened in August 2023. When we booked the conference, we had to take a punt on the venue as it wasn’t opened or even finished. Not only did the venue meet all expectations but the catering took it to another level.

In fact, all the venues FTMA used for our conference, including 1915 in the old Federal Mill, the Geelong Arts Centre and the GMHBA Stadium, aka The Cattery all delivered outstanding food, exceptional service and venues that met all our needs.

RED ACTIVITIES DAY

The FTMA Conference is not just about learning, as we place a huge emphasis on networking, which we believe is the key to success for any conference.

The Red Activities Day, sponsored by Principal Partner Pryda saw over 100 delegates participate in golfing, fishing, horse riding or enjoying a taste of the Bellarine Peninsula with a winery tour.

The day finished with our Official

Icebreaker where sponsors Pryda, Vekta & Meyer Timber put on a wonderful welcome for conference delegates.

Delegates were treated to a woodchop demonstration as part of Meyer Timber Sports and got to taste Anther’s quality Gin and fine wines on offer courtesy of Vekta Automation.

For the past four conferences, the Green Machine had won the FTMA Conference Golf Tournament, however, this year the victory belonged to the Red Devils made up of Peter Ward (DWTT), Peter Robinson (Pryda), Stuart Toakley (Australian Panel Products) and Malcolm Johnston (Dindas)

LOOKING OUTSIDE THE TRIANGLE

The conference theme was *Looking Outside the Triangle* and our first speaker made



Left: L-R: Jacinta Colley (Vidawood) with Leon Quinn (Tilling Timber). **Centre:** L-R: Andrea Alexander (Peuker & Alexander), Travis Taylor (Multinail) and Christine Flanagan (Calco Truss & Timber). **Right:** L-R: The Multinail Team of Trent Bucholz, Christopher Hey, Aaron Garvey and Stuart McBean.

PHOTOS: ANDREW LOUIS

everyone sit up straight and focus.

Robert Pradolin of Housing All Australians talked about the homelessness situation in Australia and showed a compelling short 2-minute video which had delegates in tears and shocked. (Under Cover | Trailer (youtube.com))

When people think of homeless people they don't think of their mums, their aunty or their sisters, but sadly women over the age of 55 are increasingly becoming homeless.

Furthermore, Robert touched on the role that private business has in addressing our homelessness. We must not sit back and wait for governments to take the lead, we, as industry, must step up and help find a solution.

Putting together the program for a conference is very daunting. It's hard to create a program that caters for fabricators, and suppliers, but we achieved that, as the feedback to the program has been outstanding.

We had Tim Woods presenting on the latest housing and timber markets, we were joined by an esteemed panel consisting of Karl-Heinz Weiss, Tim Newman and Nick Hewson talk about the threats to our market share, and where housing in Australia was headed.

It's not an FTMA event without the fast-talking Dr Alastair Woodard who presented on the great opportunities if we create the Advanced Timber Framing Collective to look at what our sector needs to move forward, such as revising AS1684.

Delegates were treated to a masterclass on the new IR laws by Brenda Garrard-Forster from HRAnywhere who also outlined ways in which you can avoid workplace injuries and how to handle Workcover claims.

FTMA launched the new Frame & Truss Safety Council and we had Petru Tiglar from Cyberfly provide tips on how to avoid a cyber-attack and the steps you should take to minimise disruption.

Finally, we had our keynote speaker Tim Jarvis OAM, sponsored by MiTek. Tim spoke about leadership through adversity, and you could have heard a pin drop during his presentation.



Above: Gary Stewart and the Axemen from the Western Victorian Axemen's Association put on a great woodchop demonstration for delegates.

FTMA ART

FTMA often challenges people's way of thinking, and our conference was no different. We didn't have room for our traditional trade exhibition, so we thought outside the triangle and decided to host an art exhibition. We asked our delegates to produce a piece of art that reflected their business and wow, did they deliver.

The art exhibition had twenty-one pieces of art, which was carefully curated by The Gordon Institute's past art students. All the art will be put into a book and sent to all fabricators in Australia for display in their reception area.

I'd like to thank our partners for their input into the art exhibition which was simply brilliant.

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE & COMMITMENT AWARDS

For the first time in over a decade, FTMA introduced new Awards to be presented at the National Conference Dinner which recognised outstanding contributions across various facets of the industry, from pioneering mental health support initiatives to celebrating long-term service and community engagement.

The Jackson Kidd Wellbeing Award, named in honour of Jackson whose life was tragically impacted by mental health issues, was presented to AAA Advanced Trusses. Their multi-faceted approach to employee wellbeing, which includes Annual Wellness >>



Left: L-R: FTMA NZ Crew of Peter Carruthers (FTMA NZ EO), Seith Harrison (FTMA NZ Chair), Grant Weck & Jemall Tukiri (Wecks ITM Frame and Truss NZ). Right: Richard Gurney (Prefab Technology), Ben Vannaprasseth & Julia Melbourne (Pryda).



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www.ftmanews.com

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Left: L-R: Kersten Gentle, Ruth Martella, Steve Collier (Judge), George Prothero (Alpine Truss), Clive Martella Jnr and Phil McCormack (Judge). **Right:** The Big River Group Breakwater Team, winners of the FTMA Community Award. L-R: John Recourt, Darren Benn, Julie-Anne Compston, Darren Hargreaves and James Compston

Reviews and Employee Assistance Programs alongside physical wellness facilities, sets a benchmark for mental health support in the workplace. The emotionally charged acceptance speech, highlighting personal stories of struggle and resilience, underscored the critical importance of mental health awareness and support.

In parallel, the FTMA Employee Recognition of Service Awards underscored the irreplaceable value of long-term employees to the industry's success. Highlighting the dedication of individuals like David & Mark Zischke of TT Truss & Frame, who have contributed a staggering 47 years to their company, the awards celebrated the loyalty and vast experience such employees bring.

Furthermore, the FTMA Community Award recognised companies and individuals who have significantly contributed to their local communities, whether through charity work, support initiatives, or community service. This award reflects the industry's commitment not only to its internal stakeholders but also to the broader society, reinforcing the role businesses play in fostering a positive societal impact.

Lastly, the Clive Martella Service to Industry Award, celebrated an individual who has made remarkable contributions to the frame and truss industry. This prestigious award recognises those who have not only excelled in their careers but have also provided visionary leadership, innovation, and a commitment to advancing the industry's standards and practices.

George Prothero's exemplary contribution to the frame and truss industry was honoured with the Clive Martella Service to Industry Award, signifying a high point of the evening. With a career spanning nearly five decades, George has consistently demonstrated visionary leadership, innovative solutions to complex challenges, and an unwavering commitment to advancing industry standards. Beyond his professional achievements, George's mentoring of young professionals has been

“George’s Award symbolises.....future”

invaluable, ensuring the transfer of knowledge and fostering the next generation of industry leaders. His acceptance speech, delivered with humility and gratitude, emphasised the collaborative nature of success and the importance of community within the industry. George's award symbolises not just individual excellence, but the collective spirit and enduring legacy of those dedicated to nurturing and leading the sector towards a brighter future.

Each of these awards, presented during the emotionally resonant evening at the Geelong Cats Stadium, painted a vivid picture of an industry deeply committed to its people. From the comprehensive support for employee wellbeing to the recognition of long-term service, community engagement, and individual excellence, the FTMA National Conference underlined the industry's dedication to fostering a culture of appreciation, support, and collective growth.

The response from the awardees and the audience alike was palpable, blending pride with a shared commitment to continue pushing the envelope in workplace wellbeing, community service, and industry innovation. The heartfelt speeches and stories shared on stage transcended the usual corporate accolades, touching the very hearts of those present and offering a compelling call to action for continued attention and effort in these critical areas.

As the industry moves forward, these awards serve not only as a moment of recognition but as a beacon guiding the way

towards a more inclusive, supportive, and vibrant future. FTMA's initiative in celebrating these achievements has undoubtedly set a positive precedent, emphasising the importance of recognising and building upon the efforts of those who contribute tirelessly to the industry's success.

With 223 nominations for the Employee Recognition of Service Awards alone (31 presented on the night) and numerous commendable initiatives highlighted through the other awards, the event was a resounding success. It offered a moment of reflection on the achievements thus far while looking ahead to the challenges and opportunities that lie in the future.

In summary, the 2024 FTMA National Conference Dinner Awards were a testament to an industry that values its people, cherishes its community, and strives for excellence in every endeavour. It was a celebration of the human spirit, resilience, and the collective resolve to create a better, more supportive workplace and community, making it a night to remember for all involved.

THANKS

These events do not happen without the amazing support from our annual partners and conference sponsors. We encourage you all to support those, who consistently support your industry. We sincerely thank all delegates for their attendance. This was the first time we had more fabricator representatives than suppliers with 154 fabricator representatives in attendance.

The next conference will be in 2026 and in 2025 we will hold our State Seminars. The hardest thing is going to be topping this event in 2026! **T**

Kersten Gentle



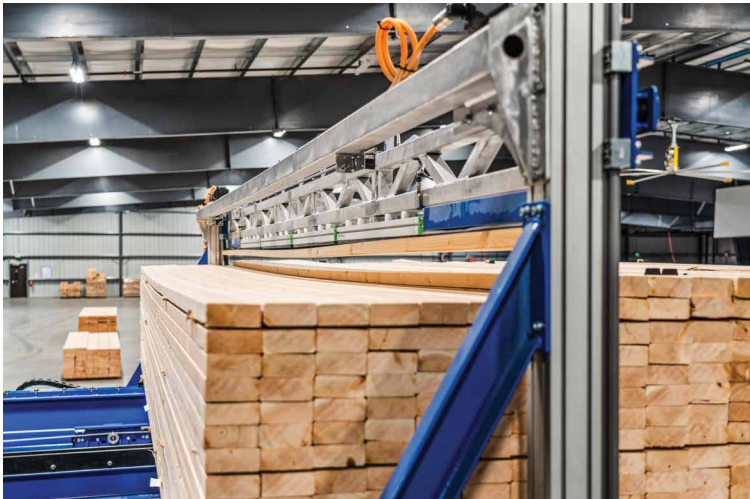
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